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C O N T E N T S

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T H E S E C O N D V O L U M E.

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|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----|--------|
| Observations on the Conversion and Apostleship of St. Paul, in a Letter to Gilbert West, Esq; | — — | Page 1 |
| Dialogues of the Dead,                                                                        | —   | 93—410 |

COPIES

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OBSERVATIONS  
ON THE  
CONVERSION AND APOSTLESHIP  
OF  
ST. PAUL.  
IN A  
LETTER TO GILBERT WEST, Esq;

VOL. II.

B



ORIENTAL

ON THE

CONSTITUTION AND HISTORY

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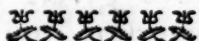
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THE EAST INDIA COMPANY

3

Vol. II

## O B S E R V A T I O N S, &amp;c.



To GILBERT WEST, Esq;

S I R,

**I**N a late conversation we had together upon the subject of the Christian religion, I told you, that, besides all the proofs of it which may be drawn from the prophecies of the Old Testament, from the necessary connexion it has with the whole system of the Jewish religion, from the miracles of Christ, and from the evidence given of his resurrection by all the other apostles; I thought the Conversion and the Apostleship of St. Paul alone, duly considered, was of itself a demonstration sufficient to prove Christianity to be a divine revelation.

As you seemed to think that so compendious a proof might be of use to convince

## ON THE CONVERSION, &amp;c.

those unbelievers that will not attend to a longer series of arguments, I have thrown together the reasons upon which I support that proposition.

Ch. xx. 6.  
13, 14.  
xxvii. 1,  
&c.

In the xxvith chapter of the Acts of the Apostles, writ by a cotemporary author, and a companion of St. Paul in preaching the gospel, as appears by the book itself, St. Paul is said to have given himself this account of his conversion and preaching, to king Agrippa, and Festus the Roman governor :

“ My manner of life from my youth,  
“ which was, at the first, among mine  
“ own nation at Jerusalem, know all the  
“ Jews, which knew me from the begin-  
“ ning (if they would testify): that, after  
“ the strictest sect of our religion, I lived a  
“ Pharisee. And now I stand and am judged  
“ for the hope of the promise made by God  
“ unto our fathers: unto which promise our  
“ twelve tribes, instantly serving God day  
“ and night, hope to come: for which  
“ hope’s sake, king Agrippa, I am accused  
“ by the Jews. Why should it be thought  
“ a thing incredible with you, that God  
“ should raise the dead? I verily thought  
“ with myself, that I ought to do many  
“ things contrary to the name of Jesus of  
“ Nazareth. Which thing I also did in Je-  
“ rusalem, and many of the saints did I shut  
“ up in prison, having received authority  
“ from the chief priests; and when they  
“ were

## OF ST. PAUL.

“ were put to death, I gave my voice against  
 “ them. And I punished them oft in every  
 “ synagogue, and compelled them to blas-  
 “ pheme; and, being exceedingly mad  
 “ against them, I persecuted them even unto  
 “ strange cities. Whereupon, as I went to  
 “ Damascus, with authority and commission  
 “ from the chief priests, at mid-day, o king,  
 “ I saw in the way a light from heaven,  
 “ above the brightness of the sun, shining  
 “ round about me, and them which journeyed  
 “ with me. And when we were all fallen  
 “ to the earth, I heard a voice speaking unto  
 “ me, and saying, in the Hebrew tongue,  
 “ Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me? It  
 “ is hard for thee to kick against the pricks.  
 “ And I said, Who art thou, Lord? And he  
 “ said, I am Jesus, whom thou persecutest.  
 “ But, rise, stand upon thy feet; for I have  
 “ appeared unto thee for this purpose, to  
 “ make thee a minister, and a witness both  
 “ of those things which thou hast seen, and  
 “ of those things in the which I will appear  
 “ unto thee; delivering thee from the people,  
 “ and from the Gentiles, unto whom I now  
 “ send thee, to open their eyes, and to turn  
 “ them from darkness to light, and from the  
 “ power of Satan unto God, that they may  
 “ receive forgiveness of sins, and inheritance  
 “ among them which are sanctified by faith  
 “ that is in me. Whereupon, o king Agrippa,  
 “ I was not disobedient to the heavenly  
 “ vision:



## ON THE CONVERSION, &amp;c.

“ vision : but shewed first unto them of Da-  
“ mascus, and at Jerusalem, and throughout  
“ all the coast of Judæa, and to the Gen-  
“ tiles, that they should repent, and turn to  
“ God, and do works meet for repentance.  
“ For these causes the Jews caught me in  
“ the temple, and went about to kill me.  
“ Having therefore obtained help of God, I  
“ continue unto this day witnessing both to  
“ small and great, saying none other things  
“ than those which Moses and the prophets  
“ did say should come: that Christ should  
“ suffer; and that he should be the first that  
“ should rise from the dead, and should  
“ shew light to the people, and to the Gen-  
“ tiles. And as he thus spake for himself,  
“ Festus said, with a loud voice, Paul, thou  
“ art beside thyself; much learning doth  
“ make thee mad. But he said, I am not  
“ mad, most noble Festus; but speak forth  
“ the words of truth and soberness. For the  
“ king knoweth of these things, before  
“ whom also I speak freely; for I am per-  
“ suaded, that none of these things are  
“ hidden from him; for the thing was not  
“ done in a corner. King Agrippa, believest  
“ thou the prophets? I know that thou be-  
“ lievest.—Then Agrippa said unto Paul,  
“ Almost thou persuadest me to be a Chris-  
“ tian. And Paul said, I would to God  
“ that not only thou, but also all that hear  
“ me this day, were both almost and alto-  
“ ther such as I am, except these bonds.”

In



In another chapter of the same book he gives <sup>Acts xxii.</sup> in substance the same account to the Jews, <sup>10—16.</sup> adding these further particulars: “ And I  
 “ said, What shall I do, Lord? And the  
 “ Lord said unto me, Arise, and go into  
 “ Damascus; and there it shall be told thee  
 “ of all things which are appointed for thee  
 “ to do. And when I could not see for the  
 “ glory of that light, being led by the hand  
 “ of them that were with me, I came into  
 “ Damascus. And one Ananias, a devout  
 “ man according to the law, having a good  
 “ report of all the Jews that dwelt there,  
 “ came unto me, and stood, and said unto  
 “ me, Brother Saul, receive thy sight; and  
 “ the same hour I looked up upon him.  
 “ And he said, The God of our fathers hath  
 “ chosen thee, that thou should’st know his  
 “ will, and see that just one, and should’st hear  
 “ the voice of his mouth. For thou shalt be  
 “ his witness unto all men of what thou hast  
 “ seen and heard. And now why tarriest thou?  
 “ Arise, and be baptized, and wash away thy  
 “ sins, calling on the name of the Lord.”

In the ixth chapter of the same book, the author of it relates the same story, with some other circumstances not mentioned in these accounts: as, that Saul *in a vision saw Ana-* <sup>Acts ix. 12,</sup>  
*nias before he came to him, coming in, and*  
*putting his hand upon him that he might re-*  
*ceive his sight; and that when Ananias had*  
*spoken to him, immediately there fell from his* <sup>Ver. 18,</sup>  
*eyes as it had been scales.*

## ON THE CONVERSION, &amp;c.

And agreeably to all these accounts, St. Paul thus speaks of himself in the epistles he wrote to the several churches he planted; the authenticity of which cannot be doubted, without overturning all rules by which the authority and genuineness of any writings can be proved or confirmed,

Gal. i.  
11—16.

To the Galatians he says: “ I certify you,  
“ brethren, that the gospel which was  
“ preached by me is not after man. For I  
“ neither received of man, neither was I  
“ taught it, but by the revelation of Jesus  
“ Christ. For ye have heard of my conver-  
“ sation in time past in the Jews religion,  
“ how that beyond measure I persecuted the  
“ church of God, and wasted it. And pro-  
“ fitted in the Jews religion above many  
“ mine equals in my own nation, being  
“ more exceedingly zealous of the traditions  
“ of my fathers. But when it pleased God,  
“ who separated me from my mother’s  
“ womb, and called me by his grace, to  
“ reveal his son in me, that I might preach  
“ him among the heathen, immediately I  
“ conferred not with flesh and blood,” &c.

Philip. iii.  
4—8.

To the Philippians he says, “ If any other  
“ man thinketh that he hath whereof he  
“ might trust in the flesh, I more: cir-  
“ cumcised the eighth day, of the stock  
“ of Israel, of the tribe of Benjamin, an  
“ Hebrew of the Hebrews. As touching  
“ the law, a Pharisee; concerning zeal,  
“ persecuting the church; touching the  
“ righteousness

“righteousness which is in the law, blameless. But what things were gain to me, those I counted loss for Christ. Yea doubtless, and I count all things but loss, for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord, for whom I have suffered the loss of all things; and do count them but dung, that I may win Christ.”

And in his epistle to Timothy he writes thus: “I thank Jesus Christ our Lord, <sup>1 Tim. i.</sup> who hath enabled me, for that he counted <sup>12, 13.</sup> me faithful, putting me into the ministry, who was before a blasphemer, and a persecutor, and injurious; but I obtained mercy, because I did it ignorantly in unbelief.”

In other epistles, he calls himself *an apostle* <sup>2 Cor. i. 1.</sup> *by the will of God, by the commandment of God* <sup>Col. i. 1.</sup> *our saviour, and Lord Jesus Christ;—and an apostle, not of men, neither by men, but by Jesus Christ, and God the father, who raised him from the dead.* All which implies some miraculous call that made him an apostle. And to the Corinthians he says, after enumerating many appearances of Jesus after his resurrection, “And last of all he was <sup>1 Cor. xv.</sup> seen of me also, as one born out of due <sup>8.</sup> time.”

Now it must of necessity be, that the person attesting these things of himself, and of whom they are related in so authentick a manner, either was an impostor, who said  
what

what he knew to be false with an intent to deceive; or he was an enthusiast, who by the force of an over-heated imagination imposed on himself; or he was deceived by the fraud of others, and all that he said must be imputed to the power of that deceit; or what he declared to have been the cause of his conversion, and to have happened in consequence of it, did all really happen, and therefore the Christian religion is a divine revelation.

Now that he was not an impostor, who said what he knew to be false with an intent to deceive, I shall endeavour to prove, by shewing that he could have no rational motives to undertake such an imposture, nor could have possibly carried it on with any success by the means we know he employed.

First then, the inducement to such an imposture must have been one of these two, either the hope of advancing himself by it in his temporal interest, credit, or power; or the gratification of some of his passions under the authority of it, and by the means it afforded.

Now these were the circumstances in which St. Paul declared his conversion to the faith of Christ Jesus. That Jesus, who called himself the Messiah, and Son of God, notwithstanding the innocence and holiness of his life, notwithstanding the miracles by which he attested his mission, had been crucified by the Jews as an impostor and blasphemer,



phemer, which crucifixion not only must (humanly speaking) have intimidated others from following him, or espousing his doctrines, but served to confirm the Jews in their opinion that he could not be their promised Messiah, who according to all their prejudices was not to suffer in any manner, but to reign triumphant for ever here upon earth. His apostles indeed, though at first they appeared to be terrified by the death of their master, and disappointed in all their hopes, yet had surprizingly recovered their spirits again, and publickly taught in his name, declaring him to be risen from the grave, and confirming that miracle by many they worked, or pretended to work, themselves. But the chief priests and rulers among the Jews were so far from being converted either by their words or their works, that they had begun a severe persecution against them, put some to death, imprisoned others, and were going on with insatiable rage against the whole sect. In all these severities Acts vii. 9. 22, 23. St. Paul concurred, being himself a Pharisee, *bred up at the feet of Gamaliel*, one of the chief of that sect; nor was he content in the heat of his zeal with persecuting the Christians who were at Jerusalem, but, *breathing* Acts ix. 1. *out threatning and slaughter against the disciples of the Lord*, went unto the high priest, and desired of him letters to Damascus to the synagogues, that if he found any of this way, whether they were men or women, he might bring



Acts xxii.  
12.

*bring them bound to Jerusalem.* His request was complied with, *and he went to Damascus with authority and commission from the high priest.* At this instant of time, and under these circumstances, did he become a disciple of Christ. What could be his motives to take such a part? was it the hope of increasing his wealth? The certain consequence of his taking that part was not only the loss of all that he had, but of all hopes of acquiring more. Those whom he left, were the disposers of wealth, of dignity, of power in Judæa: those whom he went to, were indigent men, oppressed and kept down from all means of improving their fortunes. They among them who had more than the rest, shared what they had with their brethren; but with this assistance the whole community was hardly supplied with the necessaries of life. And even in churches he afterwards planted himself, which were much more wealthy than that of Jerusalem, so far was St. Paul from availing himself of their charity, or the veneration they had for him, in order to draw that wealth to himself, that he often refused to take any part of it for the necessaries of life.

1 Cor. xv.  
8.

Thus he tells the Corinthians, “ Even  
“ unto this present hour we both hunger and  
“ thirst, and are naked, and are buffeted,  
“ and have no certain dwelling-place, and  
“ labour, working with our own hands.”

In

In another epistle he writes to them, <sup>2 Cor. xii.</sup>  
 “ Behold the third time I am ready to come <sup>14</sup>  
 “ to you, and I will not be burthensome to  
 “ you, for I seek not yours, but you; for  
 “ the children ought not to lay up for the  
 “ parents, but the parents for the children.”

To the Theſſalonians he ſays, “ As we <sup>1 Theſſ. ii.</sup>  
 “ were allowed of God to be put in truſt <sup>4, 5, 6, 9.</sup>  
 “ with the goſpel; even ſo we ſpeak, not as  
 “ pleaſing men, but God, which trieth our  
 “ hearts. For neither at any time uſed we  
 “ flattering words, nor a cloak of covetouſ-  
 “ neſs, God is witneſs; nor of men ſought  
 “ we glory, neither of you, nor yet of  
 “ others, when we might have been burthen-  
 “ ſome, as the apoſtles of Chriſt. For ye  
 “ remember, brethren, our labour and travel:  
 “ for, labouring night and day, becauſe we  
 “ would not be chargeable to any of you,  
 “ we preached unto you the goſpel of God.”

And again, in another letter to them, he <sup>2 Theſſ. iii.</sup>  
 repeats the ſame teſtimony of his diſinte- <sup>8.</sup>  
 reſtedneſs: “ Neither did we eat any man’s  
 “ bread for nought; but wrought with  
 “ labour and travel night and day, that we  
 “ might not be chargeable to any of you.”  
 And when he took his farewell of the church  
 of Ephesus, to whom he foretold that they  
 ſhould ſee him no more, he gives this teſti-  
 mony of himſelf, and appeals to them for  
 the truth of it: “ I have coveted no man’s <sup>Aſts xx.</sup>  
 “ ſilver, or gold, or apparel. Yea, you <sup>33, 34</sup>  
 “ yourſelves know, that theſe hands have

## ON THE CONVERSION, &amp;c.

“ ministered unto my necessities, and to  
“ them that were with me.” It is then  
evident, both from the state of the church  
when St. Paul first came into it, and from  
his behaviour afterwards, that he had no  
thoughts of increasing his wealth by be-  
coming a Christian; whereas, by continuing  
to be their enemy, he had almost certain  
hopes of making his fortune, by the favour  
of those who were at the head of the Jewish  
state, to whom nothing could more recom-  
mend him than the zeal which he shewed in  
that persecution. As to credit or reputation,  
that too lay all on the side he forsook. The  
sect he embraced was under the greatest and  
most universal contempt of any then in the  
world. The chiefs and leaders of it were  
men of the lowest birth, education, and  
rank. They had no one advantage of parts  
or learning, or other human endowments, to  
recommend them. The doctrines they taught  
were contrary to those which they who were  
accounted the wisest and the most knowing  
of their nation professed. The wonderful  
works that they did were either imputed to  
magick or to imposture. The very Author  
and Head of their faith had been condemned  
as a criminal, and died on the cross between  
two thieves. Could the disciple of Gamaliel  
think he should gain any credit or reputation  
by becoming a teacher in a college of fisher-  
men? could he flatter himself, that either in  
or out of Judæa the doctrines he taught  
could

could do him any honour? No, he knew very well that the *preaching Christ* crucified was a *stumbling-block to the Jews, and to the Greeks foolishness*. He afterwards found by experience, that, in all parts of the world, contempt was the portion of whoever engaged in preaching a mystery so unpalatable to the world, to all its passions and pleasures, and so irreconcilable to the pride of human reason. *We are made* (says he to the Corinthians) *as the filth of the world, the off-scouring of all things unto this day*. Yet he went on as zealously as he set out, and *was not ashamed of the gospel of Christ*. Certainly then the desire of glory, the ambition of *making to himself a great name*, was not his motive to embrace Christianity. Was it then the love of power? power! over whom? over a flock of sheep driven to the slaughter, whose shepherd himself had been murdered a little before. All he could hope from that power was, to be marked out in a particular manner for the same knife, which he had seen so bloodily drawn against them. Could he expect more mercy from the chief priests and the rulers, than they had shewn to Jesus himself? would not their anger be probably fiercer against the *deserter* and *betrayed* of their cause, than against any other of the apostles? was power over so mean and despised a set of men worth the attempting with so much danger? But still it may be said, there are some natures so fond of power,



power, that they will court it at any risk, and be pleased with it even over the meanest. Let us see then what power St. Paul assumed over the Christians. Did he pretend to any superiority over the other apostles? No; he  
 Ephes. iii. 8. declared himself *the least of them*, and *less*  
 1 Cor. xv. 9. *than the least of all saints*. Even in the churches he planted himself, he never pretended to any primacy or power above the other apostles: nor would he be regarded any otherwise by them, than as the instrument to them of the grace of God, and preacher of the gospel; not as the head of a sect. To the Corinthians he writes in these words: "Now this I say, that every one  
 1 Cor. i. 12, 13. "of you saith, I am of Paul, and I of  
 "Apollus, and I of Cephas, and I of Christ.  
 "Is Christ divided? was Paul crucified for  
 "you? or were ye baptized in the name of  
 1 Cor. iii. 5. "Paul?" And in another place, "Who  
 "then is Paul, and who is Apollus, but  
 "ministers by whom ye believed, even as  
 "the Lord gave to every man? for we  
 2 Cor. iv. 5. "preach not ourselves, but Christ Jesus the  
 "Lord, and ourselves *your servants* for  
 "Jesus sake."

All the authority he exercised over them was purely of a spiritual nature, tending to their instruction and edification, without any mixture of that civil dominion in which alone an impostor can find his account. Such was the dominion acquired and exercised through the pretence of divine inspiration, by many  
 ancient

ancient legislators; by Minos, Radamanthus, Triptolemus, Lycurgus, Numa, Zaleucus, Zoroaster, Zamolxis, nay even by Pythagoras, who joined legislation to his philosophy, and, like the others, pretended to miracles and revelations from God, to give a more venerable sanction to the laws he prescribed. Such, in later times, was attained by Odin among the Goths, by Mahomet among the Arabians, by Mango Copac among the Peruvians, by the Sofi family among the Persians, and that of the Xeriffs among the Moors. To such a dominion did also aspire the many false Messiahs among the Jews. In short, a spiritual authority was only desired as a foundation for temporal power, or as the support of it, by all these pretenders to divine inspirations, and others whom history mentions, in different ages and countries, to have used the same arts. But St. Paul innovated nothing in government or civil affairs; he meddled not with legislation, he formed no commonwealths, he raised no seditions, he affected no temporal power. Obedience to their rulers was the doctrine he taught to the churches he planted, and what he taught he practised himself; nor did he use any of those soothing arts by which ambitious and cunning men recommend themselves to the favour of those whom they endeavour to subject to their power. Whatever was wrong in the disciples under his care he freely reprov'd, as it became a teacher from God, of which numberless instances

Rom. xiii.

instances are to be found in all his epistles. And he was as careful of them when he had left them, as while he resided among them; which an impostor would hardly have been, whose ends were centered all in himself. This is the manner in which he writes to the Philippians: “Wherefore, my beloved, as ye  
 Phil. ii. 12. “have always obeyed, not in my presence  
 “only, but now much more in my absence;  
 “work out your own salvation with fear and  
 “trembling.”—And a little while after he adds the cause why he interested himself so much in their conduct, “that ye may be blameless and  
 Phil. ii. 25—27. “harmless, the sons of God, without rebuke  
 “in the midst of a crooked and perverse  
 “nation, among whom ye shine as lights in  
 “the world: holding forth the word of life;  
 “that I may rejoice in the day of Christ, that  
 “I have not run in vain, neither laboured in  
 “vain. Yea, and if I be offered upon the  
 “sacrifice and service of your faith, I joy, and  
 “rejoice with you all.” Are these the words of an impostor desiring nothing but temporal power? No, they are evidently written by one who looked beyond the bounds of this life. But it may be said, that he affected at least an absolute spiritual power over the churches he formed. I answer, *he preached Christ Jesus, and not himself.* Christ was the *head*, he only the *minister*; and for such only he gave himself to them. He called those who assisted him in preaching the gospel his *fellow-labourers* and *fellow-servants*. So

So far was he from taking any advantage of a higher education, superior learning, and more use of the world, to claim to himself any supremacy above the other apostles, that he made light of all those attainments; and declared, *that he came not with excellency of speech or of wisdom, but determined to know nothing among those he converted save Jesus Christ, and him crucified.* And the reason he gave for it was, *that their faith should not stand in the wisdom of men, but in the power of God.* Now this conduct put him quite on a level with the other apostles, who knew Jesus Christ as well as he, and had the power of God going along with their preaching in an equal degree of virtue and grace. But an impostor, whose aim had been power, would have acted a contrary part; he would have availed himself of all those advantages; he would have extolled them as highly as possible; he would have set up himself, by virtue of them, as head of that sect to which he acceded, or at least of the profelytes made by himself. This is no more than was done by every philosopher who formed a school; much more was it natural in one who propagated a new religion.

We see that the bishops of Rome have claimed to themselves a primacy, or rather a monarchy, over the whole Christian church. If St. Paul had been actuated by the same lust of dominion, it was much easier for him to have succeeded in such an attempt. It was



much easier for him to make himself head of a few poor mechanicks and fishermen, whose superior he had always been in the eyes of the world, than for the bishops of Rome to reduce those of Ravenna or Milan, and other great metropolitans, to their obedience. Besides the opposition they met with from such potent antagonists, they were obliged to support their pretensions in direct contradiction to those very scriptures which they were forced to ground them upon, and to the indisputable practice of the whole Christian church for many centuries. These were such difficulties as required the utmost abilities and skill to surmount. But the first preachers of the gospel had easier means to corrupt a faith not yet fully known, and which in many places could only be known by what they severally published themselves. It was necessary indeed, while they continued together, and taught the same people, that they should agree; otherwise the credit of their sect would have been overthrown: but, when they separated, and formed different churches in distant countries, the same necessity no longer remained.

Rom. xv.  
20.

It was in the power of St. Paul to model most of the churches he formed, so as to favour his own ambition: for he preached the gospel in parts of the world where no other apostles had been, *where Christ was not named till he brought the knowledge of him, avoiding to build upon another man's foundation.* Now, had he been an impostor, would he have confined himself to just the same gospel

as was delivered by the other apostles, where he had such a latitude to preach what he pleased without contradiction? would he not have twisted and warped the doctrines of Christ to his own ends, to the particular use and expediency of his own followers, and to the peculiar support and increase of his own power? That this was not done by St. Paul, or by any other of the apostles, in so many various parts of the world as they travelled into, and in churches absolutely under their own direction; that the gospel preached by them all should be one and the same \*, the

\* If any one imagines that he sees any difference between the doctrines of St. James and St. Paul, concerning justification by faith or by works, let him read Mr. Locke's excellent comment upon the epistles of the latter; or let him only consider these words in the first epistle to the Corinthians, c. iv. ver. 27. *But I keep under my body, and bring it into subjection, lest by any means, when I have preached to others, I myself should be a cast-away.*

If St. Paul had believed, or taught, that faith without works was sufficient to save a disciple of Christ, to what purpose did he *keep under his body*, since his salvation was not to depend upon *that* being subject to the power of his reason, but merely upon the *faith* he professed? His *faith* was firm, and so strongly founded upon the most certain conviction, that he had no reason to doubt its continuance; how could he then think it possible that, while he retained that *saving faith*, he might nevertheless *be a cast-away*? or if he had supposed that his *election* and *calling* was of such a nature, as that it *irresistibly* impelled him to good, and restrained him from evil, how could he express any fear, lest the lust of his body should prevent his salvation? can such an apprehension be made to agree with the notions of absolute predestination ascribed by some to St. Paul? He could have no doubt that the *grace of God* had been given to him in the most extraordinary manner; yet we see, that he thought his *election* was not so certain, but that he might fall from it again through the natural prevalence of bodily appetites, if not duly restrained by his own voluntary care. This single passage is a full answer, out of the mouth of St. Paul himself, to all the mistakes that have been made of his meaning in some obscure expressions concerning *grace*, *election*, and *justification*.

doctrines agreeing in every particular, without any one of them attributing more to himself than he did to the others, or establishing any thing even in point of order or discipline different from the rest, or more advantageous to his own interest, credit, or power, is a most strong and convincing proof of their not being impostors, but acting entirely by divine inspiration.

If then it appears that St. Paul had nothing to gain by taking this part, let us consider, on the other hand, what he gave up, and what he had reason to fear. He gave up a fortune which he was then in a fair way of advancing. He gave up that reputation which he had acquired by the labours and studies of his whole life, and by a behaviour which had been *blameless, touching the righteousness which is in the law*. He gave up his friends, his relations, and family, from whom he estranged and banished himself for life. He gave up that *religion which he had profited in above many of his equals in his own nation, and those traditions of his fathers which he had been more exceedingly zealous of*. How hard this sacrifice was to a man of his warm temper, and above all men to a Jew, is worth consideration. That nation is known to have been more tenacious of their religious opinions than any other upon the face of the earth. The strictest and proudest sect among them was that of the Pharisees, under whose discipline St. Paul was bred. The departing therefore

Phil. iii. 6.

Gal. i. 14

therefore so suddenly from their favourite tenets, renouncing their pride, and from their disciple becoming their adversary, was a most difficult effort for one to make, so nursed up in the esteem of them, and whose early prejudices were so strongly confirmed, by all the power of habit, all the authority of example, and all the allurements of honour and interest. These were the sacrifices he had to make in becoming a Christian: let us now see what inconveniences he had to fear: the implacable vengeance of those he deserted; that sort of contempt which is hardest to bear, the contempt of those whose good opinion he had most eagerly sought; and all those other complicated evils which he describes in his second epistle to the Corinthians, chap. xi. Evils, the least of which were enough to have frightened any impostor even from the most hopeful and profitable cheat. But where the advantage proposed bears no proportion to the dangers incurred or the mischiefs endured, he must be absolutely out of his senses who will either engage in an imposture, or, being engaged, persevere.

Upon the whole then I think I have proved that the desire of wealth, of fame, or of power, could be no motive to make St. Paul a convert to Christ; but that on the contrary he must have been checked by that desire, as well as by the just apprehension of many inevitable and insupportable evils, from taking a part so contradictory to his past life, to all the principles



## ON THE CONVERSION, &amp;c.

ciples he had imbibed, all the habits he had contracted. It only remains to be enquired whether the gratification of any other passion under the authority of that religion, or by the means it afforded, could be his inducement.

*See particularly  
Rom. xi. &  
xiii. & Col.  
iii.*

Now that there have been some impostors who have pretended to revelations from God, meerly to give a loose to irregular passions, and to set themselves free from all restraints of government, law, or morality, both ancient and modern history shews. But the doctrine preached by St. Paul is absolutely contrary to all such designs. His writings breathe nothing but the strictest morality, obedience to magistrates, order and government, with the utmost abhorrence of all licentiousness, idleness, or loose behaviour, under the cloak of religion. We no where read in his works that saints are above moral ordinances; that dominion or property is founded in grace; that there is no difference in moral actions; that any impulses of the mind are to direct us against the light of our reason and the laws of nature; or any of those wicked tenets from which the peace of society has been disturbed, and the rules of morality have been broken, by men pretending to act under the sanction of a divine revelation. Nor does any part of his life, either before or after his conversion to Christianity, bear any mark of a libertine disposition. As among the Jews, so among the Christians, his conversation and manners were blameless. Hear the appeal  
that

that he makes to the Thessalonians upon his doctrine and behaviour among them: our exhortation was “not of *deceit* nor of *unclean-* <sup>1 Thess. ii.</sup>  
 “*ness*, nor in *guile*: ye are witnesses, and <sup>10.</sup>  
 “God also, how *holily*, and *justly*, and *un-*  
 “*blameably* we behaved ourselves among you  
 “that believe\*.” And to the Corinthians <sup>2 Cor. vii.</sup>  
 he says, “We have wronged no man, we have <sup>2.</sup>  
 “corrupted no man, we have defrauded no <sup>See also</sup>  
 “man.” <sup>2 Cor. i.</sup>  
<sup>12. & iv. 2.</sup>

It was not then the desire of gratifying any irregular passion, that could induce St. Paul to turn Christian, any more than the hope of advancing himself, either in wealth, or reputation, or power. But still it is possible some men may say (and I would leave no imaginable objection unanswered), that though St. Paul could have no selfish or interested view in undertaking such an imposture, yet for the sake of its moral doctrines he might be inclined to support the Christian faith, and make use of some pious frauds to advance a religion, which, though erroneous and false

\* If St. Paul had held any secret doctrines, or esoterick (as the philosophers call them), we should have probably found them in the letters he wrote to Timothy, Titus, and Philemon, his bosom-friends and disciples. But both the theological and moral doctrines are exactly the same in *them* as those he wrote to the churches. A very strong presumptive proof of his being no impostor! Surely, had he been one, he would have given some hints in these private letters of the cheat they were carrying on, and some secret directions to turn it to some worldly purposes of one kind or another. But no such thing is to be found in any one of them. The same disinterested, holy, and divine spirit breathes in all these, as in the other more publick epistles.

## ON THE CONVERSION, &amp;c.

in its theological tenets, and in the facts upon which it was grounded, was in its precepts and influence beneficial to mankind.

Now it is true that some good men in the Heathen world have both pretended to divine revelations, and introduced or supported religions they knew to be false, under a notion of publick utility: but, besides that this practice was built upon maxims disclaimed by the Jews (who, looking upon truth, not utility, to be the basis of their religion, abhorred all such frauds, and thought them injurious to the honour of God), the circumstances they acted in were very different from those of St. Paul.

The first reformers of savage, uncivilized nations, had no other way to tame those barbarous people, and bring them to submit to order and government, but by the reverence which they acquired from this pretence. The fraud was therefore alike beneficial both to the deceiver and the deceived. And in all other instances which can be given of good men acting this part, they not only did it to serve good ends, but were secure of its doing no harm. Thus, when Lycurgus persuaded the Spartans, or Numa the Romans, that the laws of the one were inspired by Apollo, or those of the other by Egeria, when they taught their people to put great faith in oracles or in augury, no temporal mischief, either to them or their people, could attend the reception of that belief. It drew on no persecutions,

cutions, no enmity with the world. But at that time when St. Paul undertook the preaching of the Gospel, to persuade any man to be a Christian, was to persuade him to expose himself to all the calumnies human nature could suffer. This St. Paul knew; this he not only expected, but warned those he taught to look for it too \*. The only support that he had himself, or gave to them, was, "That if they <sup>Rom. viii. 17, 18.</sup> suffered with Christ, they should be also glorified together." And that "he reckoned that the sufferings of the present time were not worthy to be compared *with that glory.*" So likewise he writes to the Thessalonians, <sup>1 Thess. i. 4-7.</sup> "We ourselves glory in you in the churches of God, for your patience and faith in all your persecutions, and tribulations that you endure; which is a manifest token of the righteous judgement of God, that ye may be counted worthy of the kingdom of God, *for which ye also suffer:* Seeing it is a righteous thing with God to recompense [or pay] tribulation to them that trouble you; and to you who are troubled, rest with us, *when the Lord Jesus shall be revealed from Heaven, with his mighty angels, &c.*" And to the Corinthians he says, <sup>1 Cor. xv. 19.</sup> "If in this life only we have hope in Christ, we are of all men the most miserable." How much reason he had to say this, the hatred,

\* 1 Thess. iii. 4. 2 Cor. vi. 4, 5. Eph. vi. 10-16. Phil. i. 28-30. Col. i. 9-11. Rom. viii. 35, 36.



## ON THE CONVERSION, &amp;c.

the contempt, the torments, the deaths, endured by the Christians in that age and long afterwards, abundantly prove. Whoever professed the gospel under these circumstances, without an entire conviction of its being a divine revelation, must have been mad; and if he made others profess it by fraud or deceit, he must have been worse than mad, he must have been the most hardened wretch that ever breathed. Could any man, who had in his nature the least spark of humanity, subject his fellow-creatures to so many miseries? or could one that had in his mind the least ray of reason, expose himself to share them with those he deceived, in order to advance a religion which he knew to be false, meerly for the sake of its moral doctrines? Such an extravagance is too absurd to be supposed; and I dwell too long on a notion that upon a little reflection confutes itself.

I would only add to the other proofs I have given that St. Paul could have no rational motive to become a disciple of Christ unless he sincerely believed in him, this observation: that whereas it may be objected to the other apostles, by those who are resolved not to credit their testimony, that, having been deeply engaged with Jesus during his life, they were obliged to continue the same professions after his death, for the support of their own credit, and from having gone too far to go back; this can by no means be said of St. Paul. On the contrary, whatever force there

there may be in that way of reasoning, it all tends to convince us that St. Paul must naturally have continued a Jew, and an enemy of Christ Jesus. If they were engaged on one side, he was as strongly engaged on the other. If shame withheld them from changing sides, much more ought it to have stopt him, who, being of a higher education and rank in life a great deal than they, had more credit to lose, and must be supposed to have been vastly more sensible to that sort of shame. The only difference was, that they, by quitting their master after his death, might have preserved themselves; whereas he, by quitting the Jews, and taking up the cross of Christ, certainly brought on his own destruction.

As therefore no rational motive appears for St. Paul's embracing the faith of Christ, without having been really convinced of the truth of it; but, on the contrary, every thing concurred to deter him from acting that part; one might very justly conclude, that when a man of his understanding embraced that faith, he was in reality convinced of the truth of it, and that, by consequence, he was not an impostor, who said what he knew to be false with an intent to deceive.

But that no shadow of doubt may remain upon the impossibility of his having been such an impostor; that it may not be said, "The minds of men are sometimes so capricious, that they will act without any rational motives,

## ON THE CONVERSION, &amp;c.

“ motives, they know not why, and so perhaps might St. Paul;” I shall next endeavour to prove, that, if he had been so unaccountably wild and absurd, as to undertake an imposture so unprofitable and dangerous both to himself and those he deceived by it, he could not possibly have carried it on with any success, by the means that we know he employed.

First then let me observe, that if his conversion, and the part that he acted in consequence of it, was an imposture, it was such an imposture as could not be carried on by one man alone. The faith he professed, and which he became an apostle of, was not his invention. He was not the author or beginner of it, and therefore it was not in his power to draw the doctrines of it out of his own imagination. With Jesus, who was the author and head of it, he had never had any communication before his death, nor with his apostles after his death, except as their persecutor. As he took on himself the office and character of an apostle, it was absolutely necessary for him to have a precise and perfect knowledge of all the facts contained in the gospel, several of which had only passed between Jesus himself and his twelve apostles, and others more privately still, so that they could be known but to very few, being not yet made publick by any writings; otherwise he would have exposed himself to ridicule among those who preached that gospel with  
more

more knowledge than he: and as the testimony they bore would have been different in point of fact, and many of their doctrines and interpretations of scripture repugnant to his, from their entire disagreement with those Jewish opinions in which he was bred up; either they must have been forced to ruin his credit, or he would have ruined theirs. Some general notices he might have gained of these matters from the Christians he persecuted, but not exact nor extensive enough to qualify him for an apostle; whom the least error in these points would have disgraced, and who must have been ruined by it in all his pretensions to that inspiration from whence the apostolical authority was chiefly derived.

It was therefore impossible for him to act this part but in confederacy at least with the apostles. Such a confederacy was still more necessary for him, as the undertaking to preach the gospel did not only require an exact and particular knowledge of all it contained, but an apparent power of working miracles; for to such a power all the apostles appealed in proof of their mission, and of the doctrines they preached. He was therefore to learn of them by what secret arts they so imposed on the senses of men, if this power was a cheat. But how could he gain these men to become his confederates? was it by furiously persecuting them and their brethren, as we find that he did, to the very moment



## ON THE CONVERSION, &amp;c.

of his conversion? would they venture to trust their capital enemy with all the secrets of their imposture; with those upon which all their hopes and credit depended? would they put it in his power to take away not only their lives, but the honour of their sect, which they preferred to their lives, by so ill-placed a confidence? would men so secret as not to be drawn by the most severe persecutions to say one word which could convince them of being impostors, confess themselves such to their persecutor, in hopes of his being their accomplice? This is still more impossible than that he should attempt to engage in their fraud without their consent and assistance.

We must suppose then, that, till he came to Damascus, he had no communication with the apostles, acted in no concert with them, and learnt nothing from them except the doctrines which they had publicly taught to all the world. When he came there, he told the Jews, to whom he brought letters from the high-priest and the synagogue against the \* Christians, of his having seen in the way a great light from Heaven, and heard Christ Jesus reproaching him with his persecution, and commanding him to go into the city, where it should be told him what he was to do. But to account for his chusing

\* The disciples of Christ were not called Christians till after this time; but I use the name as most familiar to us, and to avoid circumlocutions.

this method of declaring himself a convert to Christ, we must suppose that all those who were with him, when he pretended he had this vision, were his accomplices. Otherwise the story he told could have gained no belief, being contradicted by them, whose testimony was necessary to vouch for the truth of it. And yet, how can we suppose that all these men should be willing to join in this imposture? They were probably officers of justice, or soldiers, who had been employed often before in executing the orders of the high-priest and the rulers against the Christians. Or, if they were chosen particularly for this expedition, they must have been chosen by them as men they could trust for their zeal in that cause. What should induce them to the betraying that business they were employed in? does it even appear that they had any connexion with the man they so lied for, before or after this time, or any reward from him for it? This is therefore a difficulty, in the first outset of this imposture, not to be overcome.

But further, he was to be instructed by one at Damascus. That instructor therefore must have been his accomplice, though they appear to be absolute strangers to one another, and though he was a man of an excellent character, *who had a good report of all the Jews that dwelt at Damascus*, and so was very unlikely to have engaged in such an imposture. Notwithstanding these improbabilities, this

## ON THE CONVERSION, &amp;c.

man, I say, must have been his confident and accomplice in carrying on this wicked fraud, and the whole matter must have been previously agreed on between them. But here again the same objection occurs: how could this man venture to act such a dangerous part without the consent of the other disciples, especially of the apostles; or by what means could he obtain their consent? And how absurdly did they contrive their business, to make the conversion of Saul the effect of a miracle, which all those who were with him must certify did never happen! how much easier would it have been to have made him be present at some pretended miracle wrought by the disciples, or by Ananias himself, when none were able to discover the fraud; and have imputed his conversion to that, or to the arguments used by some of his prisoners, whom he might have discoursed with, and questioned about their faith and the grounds of it, in order to colour his intended conversion!

Acts xxvi.  
26.

As this was the safest, so it was the most natural, method of bringing about such a change; instead of ascribing it to an event which lay so open to detection. For (to use the words of St. Paul to Agrippa) this *thing was not done in a corner*, but in the eye of the world, and subject immediately to the examination of those who would be most strict in searching into the truth of it, the Jews at Damascus. Had they been able to bring any shadow

shadow of proof to convict him of fraud in this affair, his whole scheme of imposture must have been nipt in the bud. Nor were they at Jerusalem, whose commission he bore, less concerned to discover so provoking a cheat. But we find that, many years afterwards, when they had had all the time and means they could desire to make the strictest enquiry, he was bold enough to appeal to Agrippa, in the presence of Festus, upon his own knowledge <sup>Acts xxvi. 26.</sup> of the truth of his story; who did not contradict him, though he had certainly heard all that the Jews could alledge against the credit of it, in any particular. A very remarkable proof both of the notoriety of the fact and the integrity of the man, who with so fearless a confidence could call upon a king to give testimony for him, even while he was sitting in judgement upon him!

But to return to Ananias. Is it not strange, if this story had been an imposture, and he had been joined with Paul in carrying it on, that, after their meeting at Damascus, we never should hear of their consorting together, or acting in concert; or that the former drew any benefit from the friendship of the latter, when he became so considerable among the Christians? Did Ananias engage and continue in such a dangerous fraud, without any hope or desire of private advantage? or was it safe for Paul to shake him off, and risque his resentment? There is, I think, no other way to get over this difficulty, but by supposing



that Ananias happened to die soon after the other's conversion. Let us then take that for granted, without any authority either of history or tradition; and let us see in what manner this wondrous imposture was carried on by Paul himself. His first care ought to have been, to get himself owned and received as an apostle by the apostles. Till this was done, the bottom he stood upon was very narrow, nor could he have any probable means of supporting himself in any esteem or credit among the disciples. Intruders into impostures run double risques; they are in danger of being detected, not only by those upon whom they attempt to practise their cheats, but also by those whose society they force themselves into, who must always be jealous of such an intrusion, and much more from one who had always before behaved as their enemy. Therefore, to gain the apostles, and bring them to admit him into a participation of all their mysteries, all their designs, and all their authority, was absolutely necessary at this time to Paul. The least delay was of dangerous consequence, and might expose him to such inconveniences as he never afterwards could overcome. But, instead of attending to this necessity, he went into Arabia, and then returned again to Damascus; nor did he go to Jerusalem till three years were past.

Gal. i. 17,  
18.

Now this conduct may be accounted for, if it be true that (as he declares in his epistle

to the Galatians) “ he neither received the Gal. i. 12.  
 “ gospel of any man, neither was he taught  
 “ it, but by the revelation of Jesus Christ.”  
 Under such a master, and with the assistance  
 of his divine power, he might go on boldly  
 without any human associates; but an im-  
 postor, so left to himself, so deprived of all  
 help, all support, all recommendation, could  
 not have succeeded.

Further; we find that at Antioch he was  
 not afraid to *withstand Peter to his face*, and Gal. ii. 11.  
 even *to reprove him before all the disciples*, be-<sup>14</sup>  
*cause he was to be blamed.* If he was an im-  
 postor, how could he venture to offend that  
 apostle, whom it so highly concerned him to  
 agree with, and please? Accomplices in a  
 fraud are obliged to shew greater regards to  
 each other; such freedom belongs to truth  
 alone.

But let us consider what difficulties he had  
 to encounter among the Gentiles themselves,  
 in the enterprize he undertook of going to  
*them*, making himself *their apostle*, and con-  
 verting *them* to the religion of Christ. As  
 this undertaking was the distinguishing part  
 of his apostolical functions; that which, in  
 the language of his epistles, he was parti-  
 cularly *called to*; or which, to speak like an  
 unbeliever, he chose and assigned to himself;  
 it deserves a particular consideration: but I  
 shall only touch the principal points of it as  
 concisely as I can, because you have in a  
 great measure exhausted the subject in your

## ON THE CONVERSION, &amp;c.

late excellent book on the resurrection, where you discourse with such strength of reason and eloquence upon the difficulties that opposed the propagation of the Christian religion, in all parts of the world.

Now in this enterprize St. Paul was to contend, 1st, with the policy and power of the magistrates; 2dly, with the interest, credit, and craft, of the priests; 3dly, with the prejudices and passions of the people; 4thly, with the wisdom and pride of the philosophers.

That in all heathen countries the established religion was interwoven with their civil constitution, and supported by the magistrates as an essential part of the government, whoever has any acquaintance with antiquity cannot but know. They tolerated indeed many different worships (though not with so entire a latitude as some people suppose); as they suffered men to discourse very freely concerning religion, provided they would submit to an exterior conformity with the established rites; nay, according to the genius of paganism, which allowed an intercommunity of worship, they in most places admitted without any great difficulty new gods and new rites: but they no where endured any attempt to overturn the established religion, or any direct opposition made to it; esteeming that an unpardonable offence, not to the gods alone, but to the state. This was so universal a notion, and so constant a maxim

maxim of heathen policy, that when the Christian religion set itself up in opposition to all other religions, admitted no intercommunity with them, but declared that the gods of the Gentiles *were not to be worshiped*, nor any society suffered between them and the *only true God*; when this doctrine began to be propagated, and made such a progress as to fall under the notice of the magistrate, the civil power was every where armed with all its terrors against it. When therefore St. Paul undertook the conversion of the Gentiles, he knew very well, that the most severe persecutions must be the consequence of any success in his design.

Secondly, This danger was rendered more certain, by the opposition he was to expect, from the interest, credit, and craft, of the priests. How gainful a trade they, with all their inferior dependants, made of those superstitions which he proposed to destroy; how much credit they had with the people as well as the state by the means of them, and how much craft they employed in carrying on their impostures; all history shews. St. Paul could not doubt that all these men would exert their utmost abilities, to stop the spreading of the doctrines he preached; doctrines which struck at the root of their power and gain, and were much more terrible to them than those of the most atheistical sect of philosophers, because the latter contented themselves with denying  
D 4 their



their principles, but at the same time declared for supporting their practices as useful cheats, or at least acquiesced in them as establishments authorized by the sanction of law. Whatever therefore their cunning could do to support their own worship, whatever aid they could draw from the magistrate, whatever zeal they could raise in the people, St. Paul was to contend with, unsupported by any human assistance.

And *Thirdly*, This he was to do in direct opposition to all the prejudices and passions of the people. Now had he confined his preaching to Judæa alone, this difficulty would not have occurred in near so great a degree. The people there were so moved by the miracles the apostles had wrought, as well as by the memory of those done by Jesus, that, in spite of their rulers, they began to be favourably disposed towards them; and we even find that the high-priest and the council had more than once been withheld from treating the apostles with so much severity as they desired to do, *for fear of the people*. But in the people among the Gentiles, no such disposition could be expected: their prejudices were violent, not only in favour of their own superstitions, but in a particular manner against any doctrines taught by a Jew. As, from their aversion to all idolatry, and irreconcilable separation from all other religions, the Jews were accused of hating mankind, so were they hated by all other nations:

nations: nor were they hated alone, but despised. To what a degree that contempt was carried, appears as well by the mention made of them in heathen authors, as by the complaints Josephus makes of the unreasonableness and injustice of it in his apology. What authority then could St. Paul flatter himself that his preaching would carry along with it, among people to whom he was at once both the object of national hatred and national scorn? But, besides this popular prejudice against a Jew, the doctrines he taught were such as shocked all their most ingrafted religious opinions. They agreed to no principles of which he could avail himself, to procure their assent to the other parts of the gospel he preached. To convert the Jews to Christ Jesus, he was able to argue from their own scriptures, upon the authority of books which they owned to contain divine revelations, and from which he could clearly convince them that *Jesus was the very Christ*. <sup>Acts ix. 22.</sup> But all these ideas were new to the Gentiles; they expected no Christ, they allowed no such scriptures, they were to be taught the *Old Testament* as well as the *New*. How was this to be done by a man not even authorized by his own nation; opposed by those who were greatest and thought wisest among them; either quite single, or only attended by one or two more under the same disadvantages, and even of less consideration than he?

The

Acts xiv.  
17. xvii.  
17. 28.

Rom. i.  
23. 25.

The light of nature indeed, without express revelation, might have conducted the Gentiles to the knowledge of one God, the creator of all things; and to that light St. Paul might appeal, as we find that he did. But, clear as it was, they had almost put it out by their superstitions, *having changed the glory of the uncorruptible God, into an image made like to corruptible man, and to birds, and to four-footed beasts, and creeping things, and serving the creature more than the Creator.* And to this idolatry they were strongly attached, not by their prejudices alone, but by their passions, which were flattered and gratified in it, as they believed that their deities would be rendered propitious, not by virtue and holiness, but by offerings, and incense, and outward rites; rites which dazzled their senses by magnificent shews, and allured them by pleasures often of a very impure and immoral nature. Instead of all this, the gospel proposed to them no other terms of acceptance with God, but a worship of him *in spirit and truth*, sincere repentance, and perfect submission to the divine laws, the strictest purity of life and manners, and renouncing of all those lusts in which they had formerly walked. How unpalatable a doctrine was this to men so given up to the power of those lusts, as the whole heathen world was at that time! If their philosophers could be brought to approve it, there could be no hope that the people would relish it,

or

or exchange the ease and indulgence which those religions they were bred up in allowed to their appetites, for one so harsh and severe. But might not St. Paul, in order to gain them, relax that severity? He might have done so, no doubt; and probably would, if he had been an impostor: but it appears by all his epistles, that he preached it as purely, and enjoined it as strongly, as Jesus himself.

But supposing they might be persuaded to quit their habitual sensuality for the purity of the gospel, and to forsake their idolatries, which St. Paul reckons amongst *the works of the flesh*, for the *spiritual* worship of the *one invisible God*; how were they disposed to receive the doctrine of the salvation of man by the cross of Jesus Christ? could they, who were bred in notions so contrary to that great mystery, to that *hidden wisdom of God*, <sup>Gal. v. 19, 20.</sup> which none of the princes of this world knew, incline to receive it against the instructions of all their teachers, and the example of all their superiors? could they, whose gods had almost all been powerful kings, and mighty conquerors, they, who at that very time paid divine honours to the emperors of Rome, whose only title to deification was the imperial power; could they, I say, reconcile their ideas to a crucified *Son of God*, to a *Redeemer of mankind* on the cross? would they look there for him *who is the image of the invisible God, the first-born of every creature*: <sup>Col. ii. 15, 16.</sup> by whom and for whom were all things created <sup>1 Cor. ii. 14.</sup> that



*that are in heaven and that are in earth, whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers?* Now, most surely, *the natural man* (to speak in the words of St. Paul) *received not these things, for they are foolishness to him; neither could he know them, because they are spiritually discerned.* I may therefore conclude, that, in the enterprize of converting the Gentiles, St. Paul was to contend, not only with the policy and power of the magistrates, and with the interest, credit, and craft, of the priests, but also with the prejudices and passions of the people.

I am next to shew, that he was to expect no less opposition from the wisdom and pride of the philosophers. And though some may imagine, that men who pretend to be raised and refined above vulgar prejudices and vulgar passions would have been helpful to him in his design, it will be found upon examination that, instead of assisting or befriending the gospel, they were its worst and most irreconcilable enemies. For they had prejudices of their own, still more repugnant to the doctrines of Christ than those of the vulgar, more deeply rooted, and more obstinately fixed in their minds. The wisdom upon which they valued themselves chiefly consisted in vain metaphysical speculations, in logical subtleties, in endless disputes, in high-flown conceits of the perfection and self-sufficiency of human wisdom, in dogmatical positiveness about doubtful opinions, or sceptical

tical doubts about the most clear and certain truths. It must appear at first sight, that nothing could be more contradictory to the first principles of the Christian religion, than those of the atheistical or sceptical sects, which at that time prevailed very much both among the Greeks and the Romans; nor shall we find that the atheistical sects were much less at enmity with it, when we consider the doctrines they held upon the nature of God and the soul.

But I will not enlarge on a subject which the most learned Mr. Warburton has handled so well\*. If it were necessary to enter particularly into this argument, I could easily prove, that there was not one of all the different philosophical sects then upon earth, not even the Platonicks themselves who are thought to favour it most, that did not maintain some opinions fundamentally contrary to those of the gospel. And in this they all agreed, to explode as most unphilosophical, and contrary to every notion that any among them maintained, that great article of the Christian religion, upon which the foundations of it are laid, and without which St. Paul declares to his proselytes, *their faith would be vain*, the resurrection of the dead with their bodies, of which resur-

1 Cor. xv.

17. 20.

\* See the Divine Legation of Moses, l. iii. See also a late pamphlet, intituled, A Critical Enquiry into the Opinions and Practice of the Ancient Philosophers, concerning the Nature of the Soul, and a Future State.

rection

Col. i. 18. rection Christ was the *first-born*. Besides the contrariety of their tenets to those of the gospel, the pride that was common to all the philosophers was of itself an almost invincible obstacle against the admission of the evangelical doctrines, calculated to humble that

Rom. i. 22. pride, and teach them, that, *professing themselves to be wise, they became fools*. This pride was no less intractable, no less averse to the instructions of Christ or of his apostles, than that of the Scribes and Pharisees. St. Paul was therefore to contend, in his enterprize of converting the Gentiles, with all the opposition that could be made to it by all the different sects of philosophers. And how formidable an opposition this was, let those consider, who are acquainted from history with the great credit those sects had obtained at that time in the world, a credit even superior to that of the priests. Whoever pretended to learning or virtue was their disciple; the greatest magistrates, generals, kings, ranged themselves under their discipline, were trained up in their schools, and professed the opinions they taught.

All these sects made it a maxim, not to disturb the popular worship, or established religion; but under those limitations they taught very freely whatever they pleased, and no religious opinions were more warmly supported than those they delivered were by their followers. The Christian religion at once overturned their several systems, taught

a morality

a morality more perfect than theirs, and established it upon higher and much stronger foundations, mortified their pride, confounded their learning, discovered their ignorance, ruined their credit. Against such an enemy, what would they not do? would they not exert the whole power of their rhetorick, the whole art of their logick, their influence over the people, their interest with the great, to discredit a novelty so alarming to them all? If St. Paul had had nothing to trust to but his own natural faculties, his own understanding, knowledge, and eloquence, could he have hoped to be singly a match for all theirs united against him? could a teacher unheard-of before, from an obscure and unlearned part of the world, have withstood the authority of Plato, Aristotle, Epicurus, Zeno, Arcesilaus, Carneades, and all the great names which held the first rank of human wisdom? He might as well have attempted alone, or with the help of Barnabas and Silas, of Timotheus and Titus, to have erected a monarchy upon the ruins of all the several states then in the world, as to have erected Christianity upon the destruction of all the several sects of philosophy which reigned in the minds of the Gentiles among whom he preached, particularly the Greeks and the Romans.

Having thus proved (as I think) that, in the work of converting the Gentiles, St. Paul could have no assistance, but was sure on the



## ON THE CONVERSION, &amp;c.

the contrary of the utmost repugnance and opposition to it imaginable, from the magistrates, from the priests, from the people, and from the philosophers: it necessarily follows, that to succeed in that work, he must have called in some extraordinary aid, some stronger power than that of reason and argument. Accordingly we find, he tells the

1 Cor. ii.

4.

Corinthians, *that his speech and preaching was not with enticing words of man's wisdom, but in demonstration of the spirit and of power.*

1 Theff. i.

5.

And to the Thessalonians he says, *our gospel came not unto you in word only, but also in power and in the Holy Ghost.* It was to the efficacy of the divine power that he ascribed all his success in those countries, and wherever else he planted the gospel of Christ. If that power really went with him, it would enable him to overcome all those difficulties that obstructed his enterprize; but *then he was not an impostor*: our enquiry therefore must be, whether (supposing him to have been an impostor) he could, by *pretending to miracles*, have overcome all those difficulties, and carried on his work with success?

Now to give miracles, falsely pretended to, any reputation, two circumstances are principally necessary, *an apt disposition* in those they are designed to impose upon, and a *powerful confederacy* to carry on and abet the cheat. Both these circumstances, or at least one of them, have always accompanied all the false miracles, ancient and modern, which

which have obtained any credit among mankind. To both these was owing the general faith of the heathen world in oracles, auspices, auguries, and other impostures, by which the priests, combined with the magistrates, supported the national worship, and deluded a people prepossessed in their favour, and willing to be deceived. Both the same causes likewise co-operate in the belief that is given to Popish miracles among those of their own church. But neither of these assisted St. Paul. What prepossessions could there have been in the minds of the Gentiles, either in favour of him, or the doctrines he taught? or rather, what prepossessions could be stronger than those which they undoubtedly had against both? If he had remained in Judæa, it might have been suggested by unbelievers, that the Jews were *a credulous people*, apt to *seek after miracles*, and to afford them an easy belief; and that the fame of those said to be done by Jesus himself, and by his apostles, before Paul declared his conversion, had predisposed their minds, and warmed their imaginations, to the admission of others supposed to be wrought by the same power.

The signal miracle of the apostles speaking with tongues on the day of *Pentecost*, had made three thousand converts; that of healing the lame man at the gate of the temple, five thousand more. Nay, such was the faith of the multitude, that they brought forth the

Acts ii. 14.  
iv. 4.

## ON THE CONVERSION, &amp;c.

sick into the streets, and laid them on beds  
 Acts x. 15. and couches, *that at the least the shadow of Peter passing by might over-shadow some of them.* Here was therefore a good foundation laid for Paul to proceed upon, in pretending to similar miraculous works: though the priests and the rulers were hardened against them, the people were inclined to give credit to them; and there was reason to hope for success among *them*, both at Jerusalem, and in all the regions belonging to the Jews. But no such dispositions were to be found in the Gentiles. There was among them no matter prepared for imposture to work upon, no knowledge of Christ, no thought of his power, or of the power of those  
 Acts xiv. who came in his name. Thus, when at Lystra St. Paul healed the man who was a cripple from his birth, so far were the people there from supposing that he could be able to do such a thing *as an apostle of Christ*, or by any virtue derived from *him*, that they took Paul and Barnabas to be gods of their own, come down *in the likeness of men*, and would have *sacrificed* to them *as such*.

Now I ask, did the citizens of Lystra concur in this matter to the deceiving themselves? were their imaginations overheated with any conceits of a miraculous power belonging to Paul, which could dispose them to think he worked such a miracle when he did not? As the contrary is evident; so in all other places to which he carried the gospel, it may be proved to demonstration, that he  
 could

could find no disposition, no aptness, no bias to aid his imposture, if the miracles, by which he every where confirmed his preaching, had not been true.

On the other hand, let us examine whether without the advantage of such an assistance there was any *confederacy* strong enough to impose his false miracles upon the Gentiles, who were both unprepared and undispensed to receive them. The contrary is apparent. He was in no combination with their *priests* or their *magistrates*; no *sect* or *party* among them gave him any help; all eyes were open and watchful to detect his impostures, all hands ready to punish him as soon as detected. Had he remained in Judæa, he would at least have had many confederates, all the apostles, all the disciples of Christ, at that time pretty numerous; but in preaching to the Gentiles he was often alone, never with more than two or three companions or followers. Was this a confederacy powerful enough to carry on such a cheat, in so many different parts of the world, against the united opposition of the magistrates, priests, philosophers, people, all combined to detect and expose their frauds?

Let it be also considered, that those upon whom they practised these arts were not a gross or ignorant people, apt to mistake any uncommon operations of nature, or juggling tricks, for miraculous acts. The churches planted by St. Paul were in the most en-



## ON THE CONVERSION, &amp;c.

lightened parts of the world, among the Greeks of Asia and Europe, among the Romans, in the midst of science, philosophy, freedom of thought, and in an age more inquisitively curious into the powers of nature, and less inclined to credit religious frauds, than any before it. Nor were they only the lowest of the people that he converted. Sergius Paulus the proconsul of Paphos, Erastus\* chamberlain of Corinth, and Dionysius the Areopagite, were his proselytes.

Upon the whole, it appears beyond contradiction, that his pretension to miracles was not assisted by the *disposition* of those whom he designed to convert by those means, nor by any powerful *confederacy* to carry on and abet the cheat; without both which concurring circumstances, or one at least, no such pretension was ever supported with any success.

Both these circumstances concurred even in the late famous miracles supposed to be done at Abbé Paris's tomb. They had not indeed the support of the government, and for that reason appear to deserve more attention than other Popish miracles; but they were supported by all the Jansenists, a very powerful and numerous party in France, made up partly of wise and able men, partly of bigots and enthusiasts. All these confederated together to give credit to miracles, said to be

\* Οικονόμος τῆς πόλεως, treasurer or bailiff of the city.

worked

worked in behalf of their party; and those who believed them were strongly disposed to that belief. And yet with these advantages how easily were they suppressed! only by walling up that part of the church, where the tomb of the saint, who was supposed to work them, was placed! Soon after this was done, a paper was fixed on the wall, with this inscription:

*De par le roy defense à Dieu*

*De faire miracle en ce lieu.*

*By command of the king, God is forbidden to work any more miracles here.* The pasquinade was a witty one; but the event turned the point of it against the party by which it was made: for if God had really worked any miracles there, could this absurd prohibition have taken effect? would he have suffered his purpose to be defeated by building a wall? When all the apostles were shut up in prison to hinder their working of miracles, the angel of the Lord opened the prison doors, Acts v. 16—26. and let them out. But the power of abbé Paris could neither throw down the wall that excluded his votaries, nor operate through that impediment. And yet his miracles are often compared with, and opposed by unbelievers to, those of Christ and his apostles; which is the reason of my having taken this particular notice of them here. But to go back to the times nearer to St. Paul's. There is in Lucian an account of a very extraordinary and successful imposture carried on in

See the Pseudo-mantis of Lucian.

Pseudom.  
Lucian.  
Varior.  
765, 766,

Ibid. 763.

Ibid. 762,  
763. 768.  
773, 774.  
777.

his days, by one Alexander of Pontus, who introduced a new god into that country, whose prophet he called himself, and in whose name he pretended to miracles, and delivered oracles, by which he acquired great wealth and power. All the arts by which this cheat was managed are laid open by Lucian; and nothing can better point out the difference between imposture and truth, than to observe the different conduct of this man and St. Paul. Alexander made no alteration in the religion established in Pontus before; he only grafted his own upon it; and spared no pains to interest in the success of it the whole *heathen* priesthood, not only in Pontus, but all over the world; sending great numbers of those who came to consult him to other oracles, that were at that time in the highest vogue; by which means he engaged them all to support the reputation of his, and abet his imposture. He spoke with the greatest respect of all the sects of philosophers, except the Epicureans, who from their principles he was sure would deride and oppose his fraud; for though they presumed not to innovate, and overturn established religions, yet they very freely attacked and exposed all innovations that were introduced under the name of religion, and had not the authority of a legal establishment. To get the better of their opposition, as well as that of the Christians, he called in the aid of persecution and force, exciting the people against them, and answering

ing objections with stones. That he might be sure to get money enough, he delivered this oracle in the name of his God: \* *I command you to grace with gifts my prophet and minister; for I have no regard for riches myself, but the greatest for my prophet.* And he shared the gains that he made, which were immense, among an infinite number of associates and instruments, whom he employed in carrying on and supporting his fraud. When any declared themselves to be his enemies against whom he durst not proceed by open force, he endeavoured to gain them by blandishments, and, having got them into his power, to destroy them by secret ways; which arts he practised against Lucian himself. Others he kept in awe and dependance upon him, by detaining in his own hands the written questions they had proposed to his god upon state affairs; and as these generally came from men of the greatest power and rank, his being possessed of them was of infinite service to him, and made him master of all their credit, and of no little part of their wealth.

Ibid. 776.  
780, 781.

Ibid. 767.

He obtained the protection and friendship of Rutilianus, a great Roman general, by flattering him with promises of a very long life, and exaltation to *deity* after his death; and at last, having quite turned his head, enjoined him by an oracle to marry his daughter, whom he pretended to have had by the *moon*; which

Ibid. 768.

Ibid. 782.

\* Muneribus decorate meum vatem atque ministrum precipio—nec opum mihi cura, at maxima vatis.



command Rutilianus obeyed, and by his alliance secured this impostor from any danger of punishment; the Roman governor of Bithynia and Pontus excusing himself on that  
 Ibid. 753. account from doing justice upon him, when Lucian and several others offered themselves to be his accusers.

He never quitted that ignorant and barbarous country, which he had made choice of at first as the fittest to play his tricks in undiscovered: but, residing himself among those superstitious and credulous people, extended his fame to a great distance by the  
 Ibid. 762. emissaries which he employed all over the world, especially at Rome, who did not pretend themselves to work any miracles, but only promulgated his, and gave him intelligence of all that it was useful for him to know.  
 Ibid. 769.

These were the methods by which this remarkable fraud was conducted, every one of which is directly opposite to all those used by St. Paul in preaching the gospel; and yet such methods alone could give success to a cheat of this kind. I will not mention the many debaucheries and wicked enormities committed by this false prophet under the mask of religion, which is another characteristic difference between him and St. Paul; nor the ambiguous answers, cunning evasions, and juggling artifices, which he made use of; in all which it is easy to see the evident marks of an imposture, as well as in the objects he  
 plainly

plainly appears to have had in view. That which I chiefly insist upon, is the strong confederacy with which he took care to support his pretension to miraculous powers, and the apt disposition in those he imposed upon to concur and assist in deceiving themselves; advantages entirely wanting to the apostles of Christ.

From all this, I think, it may be concluded, that no human means employed by St. Paul, in his design of converting the Gentiles, were or could be adequate to the great difficulties he had to contend with, or to the success that we know attended his work; and we can in reason ascribe that success to no other cause but the power of God going along with and aiding his ministry, because no other was equal to the effect.

Having then shewn that St. Paul had *no rational motives* to become an apostle of Christ, without being himself convinced of the truth of that gospel he preached; and that, had he engaged in such an imposture without any rational motives, he would have had *no possible means* to carry it on with any *success*: having also brought reasons of a very strong nature, to make it appear that the success he undoubtedly had in preaching the gospel was an effect of the divine power attending his ministry: I might rest all my proof of the Christian religion being a divine revelation upon the arguments drawn from this head alone. But, to consider this subject in all possible lights, I shall pursue the proposition  
which

## ON THE CONVERSION, &amp;c.

which I set out with through each of its several parts: and having proved, as I hope, to the conviction of any impartial man, that St. Paul was not an impostor, who said what he knew to be false with an intent to deceive, I come next to consider whether he was an enthusiast, who, by the force of an over-heated imagination, imposed upon himself.

Now these are the ingredients of which enthusiasm is generally composed; great heat of temper, melancholy, ignorance, credulity, and vanity or self-conceit. That the first of these qualities was in St. Paul, may be concluded from that fervour of zeal with which he acted, both as a Jew and Christian, in maintaining that which he thought to be right; and hence, I suppose, as well as from the impossibility of his having been an impostor, some unbelievers have chosen to consider him as an enthusiast. But this quality alone will not be sufficient to prove him to have been so, in the opinion of any reasonable man. The same temper has been common to others, who undoubtedly were not enthusiasts, to the Gracchi, to Cato, to Brutus, to many more among the best and wisest of men. Nor does it appear that this disposition had such a mastery over the mind of St. Paul, that he was not able at all times to rule and controul it by the dictates of reason. On the contrary, he was so much the master of it, as, in matters of an indifferent nature, to  
*become*

*become all things to all men*, bending his notions and manners to theirs, so far as his duty to God would permit, with the most pliant condescension; a conduct neither compatible with the stiffness of a bigot, nor the violent impulses of fanatick delusions. His zeal was eager and warm, but tempered with prudence, and even with the civilities and decorums of life, as appears by his behaviour to Agrippa, Festus, and Felix; not the blind, inconsiderate, indecent zeal of an enthusiast.

Let us now see if any one of those other qualities which I have laid down, as disposing the mind to enthusiasm, and as being characteristic of it, belong to St. Paul. First, as to melancholy, which of all dispositions of body or mind is most prone to enthusiasm, it neither appears by his writings, nor by any thing told of him in the Acts of the Apostles, nor by any other evidence, that St. Paul was inclined to it more than other men. Though he was full of remorse for his former ignorant persecution of the church of Christ, we read of no gloomy penances, no extravagant mortifications, such as the Bramins, the Jaugues, the Monks of La Trappe, and other melancholy enthusiasts, inflict on themselves. His holiness only consisted in the simplicity of a good life, and the unwearied performance of those apostolical duties to which he was called. The sufferings he met with on that account he chearfully bore, and even rejoiced in them for the love of Christ

<sup>1</sup> Cor. ix.  
20—22.

Josephus  
cont.  
Apion.  
lib. ii.  
c. 37.



Christ Jesus: but he brought none on himself; we find, on the contrary, that he pleaded the privilege of a Roman citizen, to avoid being whipped. I could mention more instances of his having used the best methods that prudence could suggest, to escape danger, and shun persecution, whenever it could be done without betraying the duty of his office, or the honour of God\*.

Compare with this the conduct of Francis of Assisi, of Ignatius Loyola, and other enthusiasts fainted by Rome; it will be found the reverse of St. Paul's. "*He wished indeed to die, and to be with Christ.*" But such a wish is no proof of melancholy, or of enthusiasm; it only proves his conviction of

Acts xvii.  
Josephus  
cont.  
Apion.  
l. ii. c. 37.

\* A remarkable instance of this appears in his conduct among the Athenians. There was at Athens a law, which made it capital to introduce or teach any new gods in their state. Therefore, when Paul was preaching *Jesus and the resurrection* to the Athenians, some of them carried him before the court of Areopagus, the ordinary judges of criminal matters, and in a particular manner entrusted with the care of religion, as having broken this law, and being a *setter-forth of strange gods*. Now, in this case, an impostor would have retracted his doctrine to save his life, and an enthusiast would have lost his life without trying to save it by innocent means. St. Paul did neither the one nor the other; he availed himself of an altar which he had found in the city, inscribed *To the unknown God*; and pleaded that he did not propose to them the worship of any new God, but only explained to them one whom their government had already received: *Whom therefore ye ignorantly worship, him I declare unto you.* By this he avoided the law, and escaped being condemned by the Areopagus, without departing in the least from the truth of the gospel, or violating the honour of God. An admirable proof, in my opinion, of the good sense with which he acted, and one that shews there was no mixture of fanaticism in his religion!

the

the divine truths he preached, and of the happiness laid up for him in those blessed abodes which had been shewn to him even in this life. Upon the whole, neither in his actions, nor in the instructions he gave to those under his charge, is there any tincture of melancholy; which yet is so essential a characteristick of enthusiasm, that I have scarce ever heard of any enthusiast, ancient or modern, in whom some very evident marks of it did not appear.

As to ignorance, which is another ground of enthusiasm, St. Paul was so far from it, that he appears to have been master not of the Jewish learning alone, but of the Greek. And this is one reason why he is less liable to the imputation of having been an enthusiast than the other apostles, though none of them were such any more than he, as may by other arguments be invincibly proved.

I have mentioned credulity as another characteristick and cause of enthusiasm; which that it was not in St. Paul, the history of his life undeniably shews. For, on the contrary, he seems to have been slow and hard of belief in the extremest degree, having paid no regard to all the miracles done by our Saviour, the fame of which he could not be a stranger to, as he lived in Jerusalem; nor to that signal one done after his resurrection, and in his name, by Peter and John, Acts iii. upon the lame man, at the beautiful gate of the temple; nor to the evidence given in  
consequence

Acs v. 18.

21—23.

25. 27.

29—32.

consequence of it by Peter, in presence of the high-priest, the rulers, elders, and scribes, that Christ *was raised from the dead*. He must also have known, that when *all the apostles had been shut up in the common prison, and the high-priest, the council, and all the senate of the children of Israel had set their officers to bring them before them, the officers came and found them not in prison; but returned, and made this report: "The prison truly found we shut with all safety, and the keepers standing without before the doors: but when we had opened, we found no man within."* And that the council was immediately told, *that the men they had put in prison were standing in the temple, and teaching the people.* And that, being brought from thence before the council, they had spoken these memorable words: *We ought to obey God rather than men. The God of our fathers raised up Jesus, whom ye slew, and hanged on a tree. Him hath God exalted with his right hand, to be a Prince and a Saviour, for to give repentance to Israel, and forgiveness of sins. And we are his witnesses of these things; and so is also the Holy Ghost, whom God hath given to them that obey him.* All this he resisted; and was consenting to the murder of Stephen, who preached the same thing, and evidenced it by miracles. So that his mind, far from being disposed to a credulous faith, or a too easy reception of any miracle worked in proof of the Christian religion, appears to

have been barred against it, by the most obstinate prejudices, as much as any man's could possibly be; and from hence we may fairly conclude, that nothing less than the irresistible evidence of *his own senses*, clear from all possibility of doubt, could have overcome his unbelief.

Vanity or self-conceit is another circumstance that for the most part prevails in the character of an enthusiast. It leads men of a warm temper and religious turn, to think themselves worthy of the special regard and extraordinary favours of God; and the breath of that inspiration to which they pretend is often no more than the wind of this vanity, which puffs them up to such extravagant imaginations. This strongly appears in the writings and lives of some enthusiastical hereticks, in the mysticks both ancient and modern, in many founders of orders and saints both male and female amongst the Papists, in several Protestant sectaries of the last age, and even in some of the *Methodists* now\*. All the divine communications, illuminations, and extasies, to which they have pretended, evidently sprang from much self-conceit, working together with the vapours

\* See the account of Montanus and his followers, the writings of the counterfeit Dionysius the Areopagite, Santa Theresa, St. Catharine of Sienna, Madame Bourignon, the lives of St. Francis of Assisi and Ignatius Loyola; see also an account of the lives of George Fox and of Rice Evans, and Whitefield's and Wesley's Journals.



of melancholy upon a warm imagination; and this is one reason, besides the contagious nature of melancholy or fear, that makes enthusiasm so very catching among weak minds. Such are most strongly disposed to vanity; and, when they see others pretend to extraordinary gifts, are apt to flatter themselves that they may partake of them as well as those whose merit they think no more than their own. Vanity therefore may justly be deemed a principal source of enthusiasm. But that St. Paul was as free from it as any man, I think, may be gathered from all that we see in his writings, or know of his life. Throughout his epistles, there is not one word that favours of vanity; nor is any action recorded of him, in which the least mark of it appears.

- Eph. iii. 8. In his epistle to the Ephesians he calls himself *less than the least of all saints*. And  
 1 Cor. xv. 9. to the Corinthians he says, *he is the least of the apostles, and not meet to be called an apostle, because he had persecuted the church of God*. In his epistle to Timothy he says,  
 1 Tim. i. 15, 16. “This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptation, That Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners; *of whom I am chief*. Howbeit, for this cause I obtained mercy, that in me first Jesus Christ might shew forth all long-suffering, for a pattern to them which should hereafter believe on him to life everlasting.”

It is true indeed that, in another epistle, he tells the Corinthians, *that he was not a whit behind the very chiefest of the apostles.* But the occasion which drew from him these words must be considered. A false teacher, by faction and calumny, had brought his apostleship to be in question among the Corinthians. Against such an attack, not to have asserted his apostolical dignity would have been a betraying of the office and duty committed to him by God. He was therefore constrained to do himself justice, and not let down that character, upon the authority of which, the whole success and efficacy of his ministry among them depended. But how did he do it? Not with that wantonness which a vain man indulges, when he can get any opportunity of commending himself; not with a pompous detail of all the amazing miracles which he had performed in different parts of the world, though he had so fair an occasion of doing it, but with a modest and simple exposition of his abundant labours and sufferings in preaching the gospel; and barely reminding them, “that the signs of an apostle had been wrought *among them*, in all patience, in signs, and wonders, and mighty deeds.” Could he say less than this? Is not such boasting *humility itself*? And yet for this he makes many apologies, expressing the greatest uneasiness in being obliged to speak thus of himself, even in his own vindication. When, in the same epistle,

<sup>2</sup> Cor. xi. 5.

<sup>2</sup> Cor. xii. 12.

<sup>2</sup> Cor. xi. i. 15—19. 30.

and for the same purpose, he mentions the vision he had of Heaven, how modestly does  
 2 Cor. xii. 2. he do it! not in his own name, but in the  
 Ver. 6. third person, *I knew a man in Christ, &c. caught up into the third Heaven.* And immediately after he adds, *but now I forbear, lest any man should think of me above that which he seeth me to be, or that he beareth of me.* How contrary is this to a spirit of vanity! how different from the practice of enthusiastick pretenders to raptures and visions, who never think they can dwell long enough upon those subjects, but fill whole volumes with their accounts of them! Yet St. Paul is not satisfied with this forbearance; he adds the confession of some *infirmity*, which, he tells the Corinthians, was given to him as an alloy,  
 et. 7. *that he might not be above measure exalted through the abundance of his revelations.* I would also observe, that he says this rapture, or vision of paradise, happened to him above fourteen years before. Now, had it been the effect of a meer enthusiastical fancy, can it be supposed that, in so long a period of time, he would not have had many more raptures of the same kind? would not his imagination have been perpetually carrying him to Heaven, as we find St. Theresa, St. Bridget, and St. Catharine, were carried by theirs? And if vanity had been predominant in him, would he have remained fourteen years in absolute silence upon so great a mark of the divine favour? No; we should cer-  
 See their Works and Lives. tainly

tainly have seen his epistles filled with nothing else but long accounts of these visions, conferences with angels, with Christ, with God Almighty, mystical unions with God, and all that we read in the works of those fainted enthusiasts whom I have mentioned before. But he only mentions this vision in answer to the false teacher who had disputed his apostolical power, and comprehends it all in three sentences, with many excuses for being compelled to make any mention of it at all. Nor does he take any merit to himself, even from the success of those apostolical labours which he principally boasts of in this epistle. For in a former one to the same church he writes thus, "Who then is Paul, and who is Apollos, but ministers by whom ye believed, even as the Lord gave to every man? I have planted, Apollos watered; but God gave the increase. So then neither is he that planteth *any thing*, neither he that watereth, but God that giveth the increase." And in another place of the same epistle, he says, "By the <sup>2 Cor. xii. 1-5. 11.</sup> grace of God, I am what I am, and his <sup>10.</sup> grace which was bestowed upon me was not in vain; but I laboured more abundantly than they all: yet *not I, but the grace of God which was with me.*"

I think it needless to give more instances of the modesty of St. Paul. Certain I am, not one can be given that bears any colour of vanity, or that vanity in particular which so



strongly appears in all enthusiasts, of setting their imaginary gifts above those virtues which make the essence of true religion, and the real excellency of a good man, or, in the scripture phrase, of a *saint*. In his first epistle to the Corinthians, he has these words, “ Though I speak with the tongues  
 “ of men and of angels, and have not charity, I am become as sounding brass, or a  
 “ tinkling cymbal. And though I have the  
 “ gift of prophecy, and understand all mysteries and all knowledge, and though I  
 “ have all faith, so that I could remove  
 “ mountains, and have no charity, I am nothing. And though I bestow all my  
 “ goods to feed the poor, and though I give  
 “ my body to be burned, and have not charity, it profiteth me nothing.” Is this the language of enthusiasm? did ever enthusiast prefer that universal benevolence, which comprehends all moral virtues, and which (as appears by the following verses) is meant by charity here? did ever enthusiast, I say, prefer that benevolence to *faith* and to *miracles*, to those religious opinions which he had embraced, and to those supernatural graces and gifts which he imagined he had acquired, nay even to the merit of martyrdom? Is it not the genius of enthusiasm, to set moral virtues infinitely below the merit of faith; and of all moral virtues to value that least which is most particularly enforced by St. Paul, a spirit of candour, moderation, and peace? Certainly  
 neither

1 Cor. xiii.  
2-4.

neither the temper nor the opinions of a man subject to fanatick delusions are to be found in this passage; but it may be justly concluded, that he who could esteem the value of charity so much above miraculous gifts, could not have pretended to any such gifts, if he had them not in reality.

Since then it is manifest from the foregoing examination, that in St. Paul's disposition and character those qualities do not occur which seem to be necessary to form an enthusiast, it must be reasonable to conclude he was none. But allowing, for argument's sake, that all those qualities were to be found in him, or that the heat of his temper alone could be a sufficient foundation to support such a suspicion; I shall endeavour to prove, that he could not have imposed on himself by any power of enthusiasm, either in regard to the miracle that caused his conversion, or to the consequential effects of it, or to some other circumstances which he bears testimony to in his epistles.

The power of imagination in enthusiastical minds is no doubt very strong; but it always acts in conformity to the opinions imprinted upon it at the time of its working, and can no more act against them, than a rapid river can carry a boat against the current of its own stream. Now nothing can be more certain, than that when Saul set out for Damascus with an authority from the chief-priests *to bring the Christians which were there,* Acts ix. 2.

## ON THE CONVERSION, &amp;c.

*bound to Jerusalem*, an authority solicited by himself, and granted to him at his own earnest desire, his mind was strongly possessed with opinions against Christ and his followers. To give those opinions a more active force, his passions at that time concurred, being inflamed in the highest degree by the irritating consciousness of his past conduct towards them, the pride of supporting a part he had voluntarily engaged in, and the credit he found it procured him among the chief priests and rulers, whose commission he bore.

If, in such a state and temper of mind, an enthusiastical man had imagined he saw a vision from Heaven, denouncing the anger of God against the Christians, and commanding him to persecute them without any mercy; it might be accounted for by the natural power of enthusiasm. But that, in the very instant of his being engaged in the fiercest and hottest persecution against them, no circumstance having happened to change his opinions, or alter the bent of his disposition, he should at once imagine himself called by a heavenly vision to be the apostle of Christ, whom but a moment before he deemed an impostor and a blasphemer, that had been justly put to death on the cross, is in itself wholly incredible, and so far from being a probable effect of enthusiasm, that just a contrary effect must have been naturally produced by that cause. The warmth of his temper carried him violently another way; and whatever delusions

delusions his imagination could raise to impose on his reason, must have been raised at that time agreeably to the notions imprinted upon it, and by which it was heated to a degree of enthusiasm, not in direct contradiction to all those notions, while they remained in their full force.

This is so clear a proposition, that I might rest the whole argument entirely upon it: but still farther to shew that this vision could not be a phantom of St. Paul's own creating, I beg leave to observe, that he was not alone when he saw it: there were many others in company, whose minds were no better disposed than his to the Christian faith. Could it be possible that the imaginations of all these men should at the same time be so strangely affected, as to make them believe that they saw *a great light shining about them, above the brightness of the sun at noon-day*, and heard the sound of *a voice from Heaven*, though not the words which it spake, when in reality they neither saw nor heard any such thing? could they be so infatuated, with this conceit of their fancy, as to *fall down from their horses* together with Saul, and be *speechless through fear*, when nothing had happened extraordinary either to them or to him; especially considering that this apparition did not happen in the night, when the senses are more easily imposed upon, but at mid-day? If a sudden frenzy had seized upon Saul, from any distemper of body or mind; can

Acts ix. 3.  
xxii. 9.

Acts xxvi.  
14. x. 7.



## ON THE CONVERSION, &amp;c.

we suppose his whole company, men of different constitutions and understandings, to have been at once affected in the same manner with him, so that not the distemper alone, but the effects of it should exactly agree? If all had gone mad together, would not the frenzy of some have taken a different turn, and presented to them different objects? This supposition is so contrary to nature and all possibility, that unbelief must find some other solution, or give up the point.

I shall suppose then, in order to try to account for this vision without a miracle, that as Saul and his company were journeying along in their way to Damascus, an extraordinary meteor did really happen, which cast a great light, as some meteors will do, at which they, being affrighted, fell to the ground, in the manner related. This might be possible; and fear, grounded on ignorance of such phænomena, might make them imagine it to be a vision from God. Nay even the voice or sound they heard in the air might be an explosion attending this meteor; or at least there are those who would rather recur to such a supposition as this, however incredible, than acknowledge the miracle. But how will this account for the distinct words heard by St. Paul, to which he made answer? how will it account for what followed upon it when he came to Damascus, agreeably to the sense of those words which he heard? how came Ananias to go to him there, and  
say,

say, "He was chosen by God to know his <sup>Acts xxii.</sup>  
 "will, and see that Just One, and hear the <sup>14.</sup>  
 "voice of his mouth?" or why did he propose to him *to be baptized*? What connexion <sup>Ver. 16.</sup>  
 was there between the meteor which Saul had seen, and these words of Ananias? will it be said that Ananias was skilful enough to take advantage of the fright he was in at that appearance, in order to make him a Christian? But could Ananias inspire him with a vision in which he saw him before he came? If that <sup>Acts ix.</sup>  
 vision was the effect of imagination, how was it verified so exactly in fact? But allowing that he dreamt by chance of Ananias's coming, and that Ananias came by chance too; or, if you please, that, having heard of his dream, he came to take advantage of that, as well as of the meteor which Saul had seen; will this get over the difficulty? No, there was more to be done. Saul was struck blind, and had been so for three days. Now had this blindness been natural from the effects of a meteor or lightning upon him, it would not have been possible for Ananias to heal it, as we find that he did, merely by putting his hands on him and speaking a few words. This undoubtedly surpassed the power of nature; and if this was a miracle, it proves the other to have been a miracle too, and a miracle done by the same Jesus Christ. For Ananias, when he healed Saul, spoke to him thus: *Brother Saul, the Lord, even Jesus that* <sup>Acts ix. 17,</sup>  
*appeared unto thee in the way as thou camest,* <sup>18. xxii. 13.</sup>  
*has*

*has sent me, that thou mightest receive thy sight, and be filled with the Holy Ghost.* And that he saw Christ both now and after this time, appears not only by what he relates Acts xxii. 17, 18; but by other passages in his epistles.

1 Cor. ix.  
i. xvi. 8.

Acts xxii.  
31. xxiii.  
11.  
Rom. xv.  
19.

From *him* (as he asserts in many places of his epistles) he learned the gospel by immediate revelation; and by him he was sent to the Gentiles. Among those Gentiles from *Jerusalem, and round about to Illyricum*, he preached the gospel of Christ *with mighty signs and wonders wrought by the power of the Spirit of God, to make them obedient to his preaching*, as he testifies himself in his epistle to the Romans, and of which a particular account is given to us in the Acts of the Apostles; signs and wonders indeed, above any power of nature to work, or of imposture to counterfeit, or of enthusiasm to imagine. Now does not such a series of miraculous acts, all consequential to, and dependent upon, the first revelation, put the truth of that revelation beyond all possibility of doubt or deceit? And if he could so have imposed on himself as to think that he worked them when he did not (which supposition cannot be admitted if he was not all that time quite out of his senses); how could so *distempered an enthusiast* make such a progress, as we know that he did, in converting the Gentile world? If the difficulties which have been shewn to have obstructed that work were such as the ablest impostor could not over-

come,

come, how much more insurmountable were they to a madman!

It is a much harder task for unbelievers to account for the success of St. Paul, in preaching the gospel, upon the supposition of his having been an enthusiast, than of his having been an impostor. Neither of these suppositions can ever account for it; but the impossibility is more glaringly strong in this case than the other. I could enter into a particular examination of all the miracles recorded in the Acts to have been done by St. Paul, and shew that they were not of a nature in which enthusiasm, either in him, or the persons he worked them upon, or the spectators, could have any part. I will mention only a few. When he told Elymas the sorcerer, at Paphos, before the Roman deputy, that *the hand of God was upon him, and* Acts xiii. *he should be blind, not seeing the sun for a season; and immediately there fell on him a mist and a darkness, and he went about seeking some to lead him by the hand;* had enthusiasm in the doer or sufferer any share in this act? If Paul, as an enthusiast, had thrown out this menace, and the effect had not followed; instead of converting the deputy, as we are told that he did, he would have drawn on himself his rage and contempt. But the effect upon Elymas could not be caused by enthusiasm in Paul; much less can it be imputed to an enthusiastick belief in that person himself, of his being struck blind when he was



## ON THE CONVERSION, &amp;c.

was not, by those words of a man whose preaching he strenuously and bitterly opposed. Nor can we ascribe the conversion of Sergius, which happened upon it, to any enthusiasm. A Roman proconsul was not very likely to be an enthusiast; but had he been one, he must have been bigoted to his own gods, and so much the less inclined to believe any miraculous power in St. Paul. When, at Troas, *Acts xx. 9.* a young man named Eutychus *fell down from a high window, while Paul was preaching, and was taken up dead;* could any enthusiasm, either in Paul or the congregation there present, make them believe that, by that apostle's *falling upon him and embracing him,* he was restored to life? or could he who was so restored contribute any thing to it himself, by any power of his own imagination? When, in the isle of Melita, where St. Paul was shipwrecked, *Acts xxvii.* there *came a viper and fastened on his hand, which he shook off and felt no harm,* was that an effect of enthusiasm? An enthusiast might perhaps have been mad enough to hope for safety against the bite of a viper without any remedy being applied to it: but would that hope have prevented his death? or were the barbarous islanders, to whom this apostle was an absolute stranger, prepared by enthusiasm to expect and believe that any miracle would be worked to preserve him? On the contrary, when they saw the viper hang on his hand, they said among themselves, “No doubt this man is a murderer, whom, though

“ though he hath escaped the sea, yet  
 “ vengeance suffereth not to live.” I will  
 add no more instances : these are sufficient to  
 shew that the miracles told of St. Paul can  
 no more be ascribed to enthusiasm than to  
 imposture.

But moreover, the power of working mi-  
 racles was not confined to St. Paul; it was  
 also communicated to the churches he planted  
 in different parts of the world. In many  
 parts of his first epistle he tells the Corinthians,<sup>1 Cor. xii.</sup>  
 that they had among them many miraculous<sup>4 5</sup>  
 graces and gifts, and gives them directions  
 for the more orderly use of them in their  
 assemblies. Now I ask, whether all that he  
 said upon that head is to be ascribed to enthu-  
 siasm? If the Corinthians knew that they had  
 among them no such miraculous powers, they  
 must have regarded the author of that epistle  
 as a man out of his senses, instead of revering  
 him as an apostle of God.

If, for instance, a Quaker should, in a  
 meeting of his own sect, tell all the persons  
 assembled there, that *to some among them was  
 given the gift of healing by the spirit of God, to  
 others the working of other miracles, to others  
 divers kinds of tongues*; they would undoubt-  
 edly account him a madman, because they  
 pretend to no such gifts. If indeed they were  
 only told by him that they were inspired by  
 the spirit of God in a certain ineffable manner,  
 which they alone could understand, but which  
 did not discover itself by any outward, distinct  
 operations,

## ON THE CONVERSION, &amp;c.

operations, or signs, they might mistake the impulse of enthusiasm for the inspiration of the Holy Ghost; but they could not believe, *against the conviction of their own minds*, that they spoke tongues they did not speak, or healed distempers they did not heal, or worked other miracles when they worked none. If it be said, the Corinthians might pretend to these powers, though the Quakers do not; I ask, whether in that pretension they were impostors, or only enthusiasts? If they were impostors, and St. Paul was also such, how ridiculous was it for him to advise them, in an epistle written *only to them, and for their own use*, not to value themselves too highly upon those gifts; to pray for one rather than another, and prefer charity to them all! Do associates in fraud talk such a language to one another? But if we suppose their pretension to all those gifts was an effect of enthusiasm; let us consider how it was possible that he and they could be so cheated by that enthusiasm, as to imagine they had such powers when they had not.

Suppose that enthusiasm could make a man think that he was able by a word or a touch to give sight to the blind, motion to the lame, or life to the dead; would that conceit of his make the blind see, the lame walk, or the dead revive? and if it did not, how could he persist in such an opinion, or upon his persisting escape being shut up for a madman? But such a madness could not infect so many at once, as St. Paul supposes at Corinth to

have

have been endowed with the gift of healing, or any other miraculous powers. One of the miracles which they pretended to was the speaking of languages they never had learned. And St. Paul says, he possessed this gift *more* <sup>1 Cor. xiv. 18.</sup> *than them all*. If this had been a delusion of fancy, if they had spoke only gibberish, or unmeaning sounds, it would soon have appeared when they came to make use of it where it was necessary, *viz.* in converting those who understood not any language they naturally spoke. St. Paul particularly, who traveled so far upon that design, and had such occasion to use it, must soon have discovered that this imaginary gift of the spirit was no gift at all; but a ridiculous instance of *frenzy*, which had possessed both him and them. But if those he spoke to in divers tongues understood what he said, and were converted to Christ by that means, how could it be a delusion? Of all the miracles recorded in scripture, none are more clear from any possible imputation of being the effect of an enthusiastick imagination than this. For how could any man think that he had it, who had it not; or if he did think so, not be deceived, when he came to put his gift to the proof? Accordingly I do not find such a power to have been ever pretended to by any enthusiast, ancient or modern.

If then St. Paul and the church of Corinth were not deceived in ascribing to themselves this miraculous power, but really had it,



## ON THE CONVERSION, &amp;c.

it, there is the strongest reason to think, that neither were they deceived in the other powers to which they pretended, as the same spirit which gave them that, equally could, and probably would, give them the others, to serve the same holy ends for which that was given. And by consequence St. Paul was no enthusiast in what he wrote upon that head to the Corinthians, nor in other similar instances, where he ascribes to himself, or to the churches he founded, any supernatural graces and gifts. Indeed they who would impute to imagination effects such as those St. Paul imputes to the power of God attending his mission, must ascribe to imagination the same omnipotence which he ascribes to God.

Having thus, I flatter myself, satisfactorily shewn that St. Paul could not be an enthusiast, who, by the force of an over-heated imagination, imposed on himself; I am next to enquire whether he was deceived by the fraud of others, and whether all that he said of himself can be imputed to the power of that deceit? But I need say little to shew the absurdity of this supposition. It was morally impossible for the disciples of Christ to conceive such a thought as that of turning his persecutor into his apostle, and to do this by a fraud in the very instant of his greatest fury against them and their Lord. But could they have been so extravagant as to conceive such a thought, it was physically impossible

impossible for them to execute it in a manner we find his conversion to have been effected. Could they produce a light in the air, which at mid-day was brighter than that of the sun? could they make Saul hear words, from out <sup>Acts xxi.</sup> of that light, which were not heard by the<sup>9</sup> rest of the company? could they make him blind for three days after that vision, and then make scales fall from off his eyes, and restore him to his sight by a word? Beyond dispute, no fraud could do these things; but much less still could the fraud of others produce those miracles subsequent to his conversion, in which he was not passive, but active; which he did himself, and appeals to in his epistles as proofs of his divine mission. I shall then take it for granted that he was not deceived by the fraud of others, and that what he said of himself cannot be imputed to the power of that deceit, no more than to wilful imposture, or to enthusiasm; and then it follows, that what he related to have been the cause of his conversion, and to have happened in consequence of it, did all really happen, and *therefore the Christian religion is a divine revelation.*

That that conclusion is fairly and undeniably drawn from the premises, I think must be owned, unless some probable cause can be assigned, to account for those facts so authentically related in the Acts of the Apostles, and attested in his Epistles by St. Paul himself, other than any of those which

## ON THE CONVERSION, &amp;c.

I have considered; and this, I am confident, cannot be done. It must be therefore accounted for by the power of God. That God should work miracles for the establishment of a most holy religion, which, from the insuperable difficulties that stood in the way of it, could not have established itself without such an assistance, is no way repugnant to human reason: but that without any miracle such things should have happened as no adequate natural causes can be assigned for, is what human reason cannot believe.

To impute them to magick, or the power of demons (which was the resource of the Heathens and Jews against the notoriety of the miracles performed by Christ and his disciples), is by no means agreeable to the notions of those who in this age disbelieve Christianity. It will therefore be needless to shew the weakness of that supposition: but that supposition itself is no inconsiderable argument of the truth of the facts. Next to the apostles and evangelists, the strongest witnesses of the undeniable force of that truth are Celsus and Julian, and other ancient opponents of the Christian religion, who were obliged to solve what they could not contradict, by such an irrational and absurd imagination.

The dispute was not then between faith and reason, but between religion and superstition. Superstition ascribed to cabalistical names,

names, or magical secrets, such operations as carried along with them evident marks of the divine power: religion ascribed them to God, and reason declared itself on that side of the question. Upon what grounds then can we now overturn that decision? upon what grounds can we reject the unquestionable testimony given by St. Paul, that he was called by God to be a disciple and apostle of Christ? It has been shewn that we cannot impute it either to enthusiasm or fraud; how shall we then resist the conviction of such a proof? does the doctrine he preached contain any precepts against the law of morality, that natural law written by God in the hearts of mankind? If it did, I confess that none of the arguments I have made use of could prove such a doctrine to come from *him*. But this is so far from being the case, that even those who reject Christianity as a divine revelation, acknowledge the morals delivered by Christ and by his apostles to be worthy of God. Is it then on account of the mysteries in the gospel that the facts are denied, though supported by evidence, which in all other cases would be allowed to contain the clearest conviction, and cannot in this be rejected without reducing the mind to a state of absolute scepticism, and overturning those rules by which we judge of all evidence, and of the truth or credibility of all other facts? But this is plainly to give up the use of our understanding where



## ON THE CONVERSION, &amp;c.

we are able to use it most properly, in order to apply it to things of which it is not a competent judge. The motives and reasons upon which divine wisdom may think proper to act, as well as the manner in which it acts, must often lie out of the reach of our understanding; but the motives and reasons of human actions, and the manner in which they are performed, are all in the sphere of human knowledge, and upon them we may judge, with a well-grounded confidence, when they are fairly proposed to our consideration.

It is incomparably more probable that a revelation from God, concerning the ways of his providence, should contain in it matters above the capacity of our minds to comprehend, than that St. Paul, or indeed any other of the apostles, should have acted, as we know that they did not, upon any other foundations than certain knowledge of Christ's being risen from the dead; or should have succeeded in the work they undertook, without the aid of miraculous powers. To the former of these propositions I may give my assent without any direct opposition of reason to faith; but in admitting the latter, I must believe against all those probabilities that are the rational grounds of assent.

Nor do they who reject the Christian religion because of the difficulties which occur in its mysteries, consider how far that objection will go against other systems, both of

religion

religion and of philosophy, which they themselves profess to admit. There are in *deism* itself, the most simple of all religious opinions, several difficulties, for which human reason can but ill account, which may therefore be not improperly stiled *articles of faith*. Such is the origin of evil under the government of an all-good and all-powerful God; a question so hard, that the inability of solving it in a satisfactory manner to their apprehensions has driven some of the greatest philosophers into the monstrous and senseless opinion of *Manicheism* and atheism. Such is the reconciling the prescience of God with the free-will of man, which, after much thought on the subject, Mr. Locke \* fairly confesses he could not do, though he acknowledged both; and what Mr. Locke could not do, in reasoning upon subjects of a metaphysical nature, I am apt to think, few men, if any, can hope to perform.

Such is also the creation of the world at any supposed time, or the *eternal production* of it from God; it being almost equally hard, according to meer philosophical notions, either to admit that the goodness of God could remain unexerted through an eternity before the time of such a creation, let it be set back ever so far; or to conceive an *eternal production*, which words, so applied, are in-

\* See his Letter to Mr. Molyneux, p. 309. vol. III.

consistent and contradictory terms; the solution commonly given, by a comparison to the emanation of light from the sun, not being adequate to it, or just: for light is a *quality* inherent in fire, and naturally emaning from it; whereas *matter* is not a quality inherent or emaning from the divine essence, but of a different substance and nature, and, if not *independent* and *self-existing*, must have been *created* by a meer act of the divine *will*; and, if *created*, then not *eternal*, the idea of *creation* implying a time *when the substance created did not exist*. But if, to get rid of this difficulty, we have recourse, as many of the ancient philosophers had, to the *independent existence of matter*, then we must admit *two self-existent principles*, which is quite inconsistent with genuine theism, or natural reason. Nay, could *that* be admitted, it would not clear up the doubt, unless we suppose not only the eternal existence of matter, independent of God, but that it was from eternity in the *order* and *beauty* we see it in now, without any *agency* of the Divine power: otherwise the same difficulty will always occur, why it was not before put into that *order* and state of *perfection*; or how the goodness of God could so long remain in a state of inaction, *unexerted* and *unemployed*. For were the time of such an *exertion* of it put back ever so far if, instead of five or six thousand years, we were to suppose millions of millions of ages to have passed since the world

world \* was reduced out of a *chaos* to an *harmonious* and *regular form*, still a whole *eternity* must have preceded that date, during which the Divine attributes did not exert themselves in *that beneficent work*, so suitable to them, that the conjectures of human reason can find no cause for its being delayed.

But because of these difficulties, or any other that may occur in the system of deism, no wise man will deny the *being* of God, or his *infinite wisdom, goodness, and power*, which are proved by such evidence as carries the clearest and strongest conviction, and cannot be refused without involving the mind in *far greater difficulties*, even in downright *absurdities* and *impossibilities*. The only part therefore that can be taken is, to account in the best manner that our weak reason is able to do, for such seeming objections; and where *that* fails, to acknowledge its weakness, and acquiesce under the certainty that our very imperfect knowledge or judgement cannot be the measure of the Divine wisdom, or the universal standard of truth. So likewise it is with respect to the *Christian religion*. Some *difficulties* occur in that revelation, which human reason can hardly clear; but as the truth of it stands upon evidence so strong and convincing, that it cannot be de-

\* By the *world*, I do not mean this earth alone, but the whole material *universe*, with all its inhabitants. Even *created spirits* fall under the same reasoning; for they must also have had a *beginning*; and before that *beginning*, an *eternity* must have preceded.



nied without much *greater difficulties* than those that attend the belief of it, as I have before endeavoured to prove, we ought not to reject it upon such objections, however mortifying they may be to our pride. *That* indeed would have all things made plain to us; but God has thought proper to proportion our knowledge to our *wants*, not to our *pride*. All that concerns our *duty* is clear; and as to other points either of natural or revealed religion, if he has left some obscurities in them, is that any reasonable cause of complaint? Not to rejoice in the benefit of what he has graciously allowed us to know, from a presumptuous disgust at our incapacity of knowing more, is as absurd as it would be to refuse to *walk*, because we cannot *fly*.

From the arrogant ignorance of metaphysical reasonings, aiming at matters above our knowledge, arose all the speculative impiety, and many of the worst superstitions, of the old heathen world, before the Gospel was preached to bring men back again to the primitive faith; and from the same source have since flowed some of the greatest corruptions of the evangelical truth, and the most inveterate prejudices against it; an effect just as natural for our eyes to grow weak, and even blind, by being strained to look at objects too distant, or not made for them to see.

Are then our intellectual faculties of no use in religion? Yes undoubtedly of the most necessary use, when rightly employed.

The

The proper employment of them is, to distinguish its genuine doctrines from others erroneously or corruptly ascribed to it; to consider the importance and purport of them, with the connection they bear to one another; but, first of all, to examine with the strictest attention the evidence by which religion is proved, *internal* as well as *external*. If the *external* evidence be convincingly strong, and there is no *internal* proof of its falsehood, but much to support and confirm its truth; then surely no difficulties ought to prevent our giving a full assent and belief to it. It is our duty indeed to endeavour to find the best solutions we can to them; but where no satisfactory ones are to be found, it is no less our duty to acquiesce with humility, and believe that to be right which we know is above us, and belonging to a wisdom superior to ours.

Nor let it be said, that this will be an argument for the admitting of all doctrines, however absurd, that may have been grafted upon the Christian faith. Those which can plainly be proved *not to belong to it* fall not under the reasoning I have laid down (and certainly none do belong to it, which contradict either our *clear, intuitive knowledge*, or the *evident principles and dictates of reason*). I speak only of difficulties which attend the belief of the Gospel in some of its pure and essential doctrines, plainly and evidently delivered there; which, being made known to  
us

## ON THE CONVERSION, &amp;c.

us by a *revelation* supported by *proofs* that our reason *ought to admit*, and not being such things as it can *certainly know to be false*, must be received by it as *objects of faith*, though they are such as it could not have discovered by any natural means, and such as are difficult to be conceived, or satisfactorily explained, by its limited powers. If *the glorious light of the Gospel* be sometimes overcast with clouds of doubt, so is the light of our *reason* too. But shall we deprive ourselves of the advantage of *either*, because those clouds cannot perhaps be entirely removed while we remain in this mortal life? shall we obstinately and frowardly shut our eyes against *that day-spring from on high that has visited us*, because we are not as yet able to bear the full blaze of his beams? Indeed, not even in heaven itself, not in the highest state of perfection to which a finite being can ever attain, will all the counsels of Providence, all the *height* and the *depth* of the infinite wisdom of God, be ever disclosed or understood. *Faith* even then will be necessary; and there will be *mysteries* which cannot be penetrated by the most exalted archangel, and *truths* which cannot be known by him otherwise than from *revelation*, or believed upon any other ground of assent than a *submissive confidence in the Divine wisdom*.

What, then, shall man presume that his weak and narrow understanding is sufficient to

to guide him *into all truth*, without any need of *revelation or faith*? shall he complain that *the ways of God are not like his ways*, and *past his finding out*? True Philosophy, as well as true Christianity, would teach us a wiser and modest part. It would teach us to be content within those bounds which God has assigned to us, *casting down imaginations, and every high thing that exalted itself against the knowledge of God, and bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ.*



to guide him into all truth, without any need  
of revelation or faith? Shall he complain that  
the enemy of God has set him on fire, and says  
"I am burning"? True Philosophy, as well  
as true Christianity, would teach us a wiser  
and nobler part. It would teach us to be  
content within those bounds which God  
has assigned to us, casting down imaginations,  
and every high thing that exalted itself against  
the knowledge of God, and bringing into cap-  
tivity every thought to the obedience of Christ.

D I A L O G U E S

OF THE

D E A D.

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OF THE

D E A D

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# C O N T E N T S

OF

## T H E D I A L O G U E S .

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### D I A L O G U E I .

**L**ORD FALKLAND—MR. HAMPDEN.

P. 99

### D I A L O G U E II .

LOUIS LE GRAND—PETER THE GREAT.

P. 105

VOL. II,

G 7

DIA-



# CONTENTS.

## DIALOGUE III.

PLATO—FENELON. p. 111

## DIALOGUE IV.

Mr. ADDISON—Dr. SWIFT. p. 118

## DIALOGUE V.

ULYSSES—CIRCE. p. 125

## DIALOGUE VI.

MERCURY—An English DUELLIST—  
A North American SAVAGE. p. 132

## DIALOGUE VII.

PLINY THE ELDER — PLINY THE  
YOUNGER. p. 139

## DIALOGUE VIII.

FERNANDO CORTEZ—WILLIAM PENN.  
p. 145.

INDIA

# C O N T E N T S.

## D I A L O G U E IX.

MARCUS PORTIUS CATO — MESSALA  
CORVINUS. p. 153

## D I A L O G U E X.

CHRISTINA, Queen of Sweden—Chan-  
cellor OXENSTIERN. p. 159

## D I A L O G U E XI.

TITUS VESPASIANUS — PUBLIUS COR-  
NELIUS SCIPIO AFRICANUS. p. 164

## D I A L O G U E XII.

HENRY Duke of GUISE—MACHIABEL.  
p. 170

## D I A L O G U E XIII.

VIRGIL—HORACE—MERCURY—SCA-  
LIGER the Elder. p. 178

# C O N T E N T S.

## D I A L O G U E XIV.

BOILEAU—POPE. p. 186

## D I A L O G U E XV.

OCTAVIA—PORTIA—ARRIA. p. 211

## D I A L O G U E XVI.

LOUISE DE COLIGNI, Princess of  
Orange—FRANCES WALSINGHAM,  
Countess of Effex and Clanrickard;  
before, Lady SIDNEY. p. 219

## D I A L O G U E XVII.

MARCUS BRUTUS—POMPONIUS ATTICUS. p. 224

## D I A L O G U E XVIII.

WILLIAM THE THIRD, King of England—JOHN DE WITT, Pensioner of Holland. p. 235

D I A-

# CONTENTS.

## DIALOGUE XIX.

M. APICIUS—DARTENEUF. p. 253

## DIALOGUE XX.

ALEXANDER THE GREAT—CHARLES  
the Twelfth, King of Sweden,  
p. 267

## DIALOGUE XXI.

Cardinal XIMENES—Cardinal WOLSEY,  
p. 277

## DIALOGUE XXII.

LUCIAN—RABELAIS. p. 285

## DIALOGUE XXIII.

PERICLES—COSMO DE MEDICIS, the  
First of that Name. p. 294



# C O N T E N T S.

## D I A L O G U E XXIV.

LOCKE—BAYLE.

P. 311

## D I A L O G U E XXV.

ARCHIBALD Earl of DOUGLAS, Duke of  
TOURNAINE—JOHN Duke of ARGYLE  
and GREENWICH, Field Marshal of  
his Britannick Majesty's Forces.

P. 322

## D I A L O G U E XXVI.

CADMUS—HERCULES \*.

P. 341

## D I A L O G U E XXVII.

MERCURY—And a modern fine LADY.

P. 349

\* This and the two following Dialogues are by  
another hand.

D I A-

# C O N T E N T S.

## D I A L O G U E XXVIII.

PLUTARCH—CHARON—And a modern BOOKSELLER. P. 354

## D I A L O G U E XXIX.

PUBLIUS CORNELIUS SCIPIO AFRICANUS—CAIUS JULIUS CÆSAR. p. 369

## D I A L O G U E XXX.

PLATO—DIOGENES. P. 383

## D I A L O G U E XXXI.

ARISTIDES — PHOCION — DEMOSTHENES. P. 394

## D I A L O G U E XXXII.

MARCUS AURELIUS PHILOSOPHUS —  
SERVIUS TULLIUS. P. 405  
P R E-

CONTENTS

|                                 |        |
|---------------------------------|--------|
| DIALOGUE XXVIII                 |        |
| CHARON—AND A PRO-               |        |
| PHET—DETO ROBERTS               | P. 322 |
| DIALOGUE XXIX                   |        |
| THELUS CORNELIUS SCIPIO AFRICA- |        |
| NUS—CAIUS JULIUS CAESAR         | P. 329 |
| DIALOGUE XXX                    |        |
| PLATO—DIOTYME                   | P. 333 |
| DIALOGUE XXXI                   |        |
| ANTISTES—PHOCION—DEMOSTHENES    |        |
|                                 | P. 334 |
| DIALOGUE XXXII                  |        |
| MARCUS AURELIUS THURGOOD        |        |
| SEXTUS TELLUS                   | P. 335 |
| THE                             |        |

# P R E F A C E

T O

## T H E D I A L O G U E S ;

As published, with Corrections, in 1765.

**L**UCIAN among the ancients, and among the moderns Fenelon archbishop of Cambray, and Monsieur Fontenelle, have written *Dialogues of the Dead* with a general applause. The plan they have traced out is so extensive, that the matter which lies within the compass of it can scarcely be exhausted. It sets before us the history of all times and all nations, presents to the choice of a writer all characters of remarkable persons, which may best be opposed to or compared with each other; and is perhaps one of the most agreeable methods, that can be employed, of conveying to the mind any critical, moral, or political observations; because the *dramatic* spirit, which may be thrown into them, gives them more life than they could have in dissertations, however well written. And sometimes *a new dress* may render *an old truth* more pleasing to those whom the mere love of novelty betrays into



error, as it frequently does not only the *wits*, but the *sages* of these days. Indeed one of the best services, that could now be done to mankind by any good writer, would be the bringing them back to *common sense*; from which the desire of shining by extraordinary notions has seduced great numbers, to the no small detriment of morality, and of all real knowledge.

It may be proper to observe, that, in all works of this nature, the dead are often supposed, by a necessary fiction, to be thoroughly informed of many particulars, which happened in times posterior to their own; and in all parts of the world, as well as in the countries to which they belonged. Thus, in Fenelon's dialogue between Gelon and Dion, the former finds fault with the conduct of the latter; and in another between Solon and the emperor Justinian, the Athenian censures the government of the Roman Legislator, and talks of the History of Procopius as if he had read it. I have also taken the liberty that others have used, to date the several dialogues, as best suited with the purposes to which they were written, supposing some of them to have passed immediately after the decease of one or more of the speakers, and others at a very great distance of time from that in which they lived.

But

But I have not in this edition made any alteration in the dates of the former. Elysium, Minos, Mercury, Charon, and Styx, being necessary allegories in this way of writing, are occasionally used here, as they have been by Fontenelle and the archbishop of Cambray : which (if it offended any critical or pious ears) I would justify by the declaration gravely annexed to the works of all Italian writers, wherein they used such expressions : “ *Se haveffi nominato Fato, Fortuna, Destino, Elysio, Stige, &c. sono schorzi di penna poetica, non sentimenti di animo Catolico\**.”

Three of these dialogues were written by a different hand ; as I am afraid would have appeared but too plainly to the reader, without my having told it. If the friend who favoured me with them should ever write any more, I shall think that the publick owes me a great obligation, for having excited a genius so capable of uniting delight with instruction, and giving to virtue and knowledge those graces, which the wit of the age has too often, and too successfully, employed all its skill to bestow on vice and folly.

\* If I have named *Fate, Fortune, Destiny, Elysium, Styx, &c.* they are only the sports of a poetical pen, not the sentiments of a Catholic mind.

Beside many corrections which the reader will find in this edition, four new dialogues are added, in order to complete one chief design of the work, I mean the illustrating of certain *principles* and certain *characters* of importance, by bringing in persons who have acted upon different systems, to defend their own conduct, or to explain their own notions, by free discourse with each other, and in a manner conformable to the turn of their minds, as they have been represented to us by the best authors.

To see this done in the compass of a small volume, may possibly induce our young gentry (for whose service it is more particularly intended) to meditate on the subjects treated of in this work : and, if they make a proper use of the lights given to them, the publick, I hope, will derive some benefit from the book, when the writer shall be no more.

# DIALOGUES

OF THE

D E A D,



## DIALOGUE I.

Lord FALKLAND—Mr. HAMPDEN,

LORD FALKLAND.

**A**RE not you surprized to see me in Elysium, Mr. Hampden?

MR. HAMPDEN.

I was going to put the same question to your lordship; for, doubtless, you thought me a rebel.

LORD FALKLAND.

And certainly you thought me an apostate from the commonwealth, and a supporter of tyranny.

MR. HAMPDEN.

I own I did; and I don't wonder at the severity of your thoughts about me. The heat of the times deprived us both of our natural candour,



## DIALOGUES OF THE DEAD.

candour. Yet I will confess to you here, that, before I died, I began to see in our party enough to justify your apprehensions, that the civil war, which we had entered into from generous motives, from a laudable desire to preserve our free constitution, would end very unhappily, and perhaps, in the issue, destroy that constitution, even by the arms of those who pretended to be most zealous for it.

LORD FALKLAND.

And I will as frankly own to you \*, that I saw, in the court and camp of the king, so much to alarm me for the liberty of my country, if our arms were successful, that I dreaded a victory little less than I did a defeat; and had nothing in my mouth but the word *peace*, which I constantly repeated with passionate fondness, in every council at which I was called to assist.

MR. HAMRDEN.

I wished for peace too, as ardently as your lordship. But I saw no hopes of it. The insincerity of the king and the influence of the queen made it impossible to trust to his promises or declarations. Nay, what reliance could we reasonably have upon *laws* designed to limit and restrain the power of the crown, after he had violated *the bill of rights*, obtained with such difficulty, and containing so clear an assertion of the privileges which had been in dispute? If his conscience would allow him

\* See the Letters, in the Sidney Collection, from the earl of Sunderland to his lady,

to break an act of parliament *made to determine the bounds of the royal prerogative*, because he thought *that the royal prerogative could have no bounds*; what legal ties could bind a conscience so prejudiced? or what effectual security could his people obtain against the obstinate malignity of such an opinion, but entirely taking from him *the power of the sword*, and enabling *themselves* to defend the laws he had past?

LORD FALKLAND.

There is evidently too much truth in what you have said. But, by taking from the king *the power of the sword*, you in reality took *all power*. It was converting the government into a *democracy*; and if he had submitted to it, he would only have preserved the name of a king. The sceptre would have been held by those who had the sword; or we must have lived in a state of perpetual anarchy, without any force or balance in the government; a state which could not have lasted long, but would have ended in a republick, or in absolute dominion.

MR. HAMPDEN.

Your reasoning seems unanswerable. But what could we do? Let Dr. Laud and those other court-divines who directed the king's conscience, and fixed it in such principles as made him unfit to govern a limited monarchy though with many good qualities, and some great ones; let them, I say, answer for all

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## DIALOGUES OF THE DEAD.

the mischiefs they brought upon him and the nation.

LORD FALKLAND.

They were indeed much to be blamed: but those principles had gained ground before their times; and seemed the principles of our church, in opposition to the Jesuits, who had certainly gone too far in the other extreme.

MR. HAMPDEN.

It is a disgrace to our church to have taken up such opinions; and I will venture to prophesy, that our clergy, in future times, must renounce them, or they will be turned against them by those who mean their destruction. Suppose a Popish king on the throne. Will the clergy adhere to passive obedience and non-resistance? If they do, they deliver up their religion to Rome; if they do not, their practice will confute their own doctrines.

LORD FALKLAND.

Nature, Sir, will in the end be sure to set right whatever opinion contradicts her great laws, let who will be the teacher. But, indeed, the more I reflect on those miserable times in which we both lived, the more I esteem it a favour of Providence to us, that we were cut off so soon. *The most grievous misfortune that can befall a virtuous man, is to be in such a state, that he can hardly so act as to approve his own conduct.* In such a state we both were. We could not easily make a step, either forward or backward, without great hazard of guilt, or at least of dishonour.

We were unhappily entangled in connections with men who did not mean so well as ourselves, or did not judge so rightly. If we endeavoured to stop them, they thought us false to the cause: if we went on with them, we ran directly upon rocks, which we saw, but could not avoid. Nor could we take shelter in a philosophical retreat from business. Inaction would in us have been cowardice and desertion. To compleat the publick calamities, a religious fury, on both sides, mingled itself with the rage of our civil dissensions, more frantick than that, more implacable, more averse from all healing measures. The most intemperate counsels were thought the most *pious*; and a regard to the laws, if they opposed the suggestions of these fiery zealots, was accounted *irreligion*. This added new difficulties to what was before but too difficult in itself, the settling of a nation which no longer could put any confidence in its sovereign, nor lay more restraints on the royal authority without destroying the balance of the whole constitution. In these circumstances, the balls, that pierced our hearts, were directed thither by the hands of our guardian angels, to deliver us from horrors we could not support, and perhaps from a guilt our souls abhorred.

MR. HAMPDEN.

Indeed things were brought to so deplorable a state, that, if either of us had seen his party triumphant, he must have lamented that tri-

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umph



## DIALOGUES OF THE DEAD.

umph as the ruin of his country. Were I to return into life, the experience I have had would make me very cautious of kindling the sparks of civil war in England: for I have seen, that, when once that devouring fire is lighted, it is not in the power of the head of a party to say to the conflagration, *Thus far shalt thou go, and here shall thy violence stop.*

LORD FALKLAND.

The conversation we have had, as well as the reflexions of my own mind on past events, would, if I were condemned to my body again, teach me great moderation in my judgements of persons, who might happen to differ from me in difficult scenes of publick action: they would entirely cure me of the *spirit of party*, and make me think, that, as in the church, so also in the state, no evil is more to be feared than a rancorous and enthusiastic zeal.

DIA.

## DIALOGUE II.

LOUIS LE GRAND—PETER THE GREAT.

LOUIS.

**W**HO, Sir, could have thought, when you were learning the trade of a shipwright in the dockyards of England and Holland, that you would ever acquire, as I had done, the surname of Great?

PETER.

Which of us best deserved that title, posterity will decide. But my greatness appeared sufficiently in that very act which seemed to you a debasement.

LOUIS.

The dignity of a king does not stoop to such mean employments. For my own part, I was careful never to appear to the eyes of my subjects or foreigners, but in all the splendour and majesty of royal power.

PETER.

Had I remained on the throne of Russia, as my ancestors did, environed with all the pomp of barbarous greatness; I should have been idolized by my people, as much, at least, as you ever were by the French. My  
despotism

despotism was more absolute, their servitude was more humble. But then I could not have reformed their evil customs; have taught them arts, civility, navigation, and war; have exalted them from brutes in human shapes into men. In this was seen the extraordinary force of my genius beyond any comparison with all other kings, that I thought it no degradation, or diminution of my greatness, to descend from my throne, and go and work in the dock-yards of a foreign republick; to serve as a private sailor in my own fleets, and as a common soldier in my own army; till I had raised myself by my merit in all the several steps and degrees of promotion, up to the highest command, and had thus induced my nobility to submit to a regular subordination in the sea and land-service, by a lesson hard to their pride, and which they would not have learnt from any other master, or by any other method of instruction.

LOUIS.

I am forced to acknowledge that it was a great act. When I thought it a mean one, my judgement was perverted by the prejudices arising from my own education, and the ridicule thrown upon it by some of my courtiers, whose minds were too narrow to be able to comprehend the greatness of yours in that situation.

PETER.

PETER.

It was an act of more heroism than any ever done by Alexander or Cæsar. Nor would I consent to exchange my glory with theirs. They both did great things; but they were at the head of great nations, far superior in valour and military skill to those with whom they contended. I was the king of an ignorant, undisciplined, barbarous people. My enemies were at first so superior to my subjects, that ten thousand of them could beat a hundred thousand Russians. They had formidable navies: I had not a ship. The king of Sweden was a prince of the most intrepid courage, assisted by generals of consummate knowledge in war, and served by soldiers so disciplined, that they were become the admiration and terror of Europe. Yet I vanquished these soldiers; I drove that prince to take refuge in Turkey; I won battles at sea, as well as land; I *new-created* my people; I gave them arts, science, policy; I enabled them to keep all the powers of the North in awe and dependance, to give kings to Poland, to check and intimidate the Ottoman emperors, to mix with great weight in the affairs of all Europe. What other man has ever done such wonders as these? Read all the records of ancient and modern times; and find, if you can, one fit to be put in comparison with me!

LOUIS.



LOUIS.

Your glory would indeed have been supreme and unequalled, if, in civilizing your subjects, you had reformed the brutality of your own manners, and the barbarous vices of your nature. But, alas! the legislator and reformer of the Muscovites was drunken and cruel.

PETER.

My drunkenness I confess: nor will I plead, to excuse it, the example of Alexander. It inflamed the tempers of both, which were by nature too fiery, into furious passions of anger; and produced actions, of which our reason, when sober, was ashamed. But the cruelty you upbraid me with may in some degree be excused, as necessary to the work I had to perform. Fear of punishment was in the hearts of my barbarous subjects the only principle of obedience. To make them respect the royal authority, I was obliged to arm it with all the terrors of rage. You had a more pliant people to govern, a people whose minds could be ruled, like a fine managed horse, with an easy and gentle rein. The fear of shame did more with them than the fear of the *knout* could do with the Russians. The humanity of your character and the ferocity of mine were equally suitable to the nations over which we reigned. But what excuse can you find for the cruel violence you employed against your Protestant

testant subjects? They desired nothing but to live under the protection of laws you yourself had confirmed; and they repaid that protection by the most hearty zeal for your service. Yet these did you force, by the most inhuman severities, either to quit the religion in which they were bred, and which their consciences still retained, or to leave their native land, and endure all the woes of a perpetual exile. If the rules of policy could not hinder you from thus depopulating your kingdom, and transferring to foreign countries its manufactures and commerce; I am surprized that your heart itself did not stop you. It makes one shudder, to think that such orders should be sent from the most polished court in Europe, as the most savage Tartars could hardly have executed without remorse and compassion.

LOUIS.

It was not my heart, but my religion, that dictated these severities. My confessor told me, they alone would atone for all my sins.

PETER.

Had I believed in my patriarch as you believed in your priest, I should not have been the great monarch that I was.—But I mean not to detract from the merit of a prince whose memory is dear to his subjects. They are proud of having obeyed you; which is certainly the highest praise to a king. My  
people

people also date their glory from the æra of my reign. But there is this capital distinction between us. The pomp and pageantry of state were necessary to your greatness: I was great in myself, great in the energy and powers of my mind, great in the superiority and *sovereignty* of my soul over all other men,

## DIALOGUE III,

PLATO—FENELON.

PLATO.

**W**ELCOME to Elysium, O thou, the most pure, the most gentle, the most refined disciple of philosophy, that the world, in modern times, has produced! Sage Fenelon, welcome!—I need not name myself to you. Our souls by sympathy must know one another.

FENELON.

I know you to be Plato, the most amiable of all the disciples of Socrates, and the philosopher of all antiquity whom I most desired to resemble.

PLATO.

Homer and Orpheus are impatient to see you in that region of these happy fields, which their shades inhabit. They both acknowledge you to be a great poet, though you have written no verses. And they are now busy in composing for you unfading wreaths of all the finest and sweetest Elysian flowers. But I will lead you from them to the sacred grove of Philosophy, on the highest hill of Elysium, where the air is most pure and most serene. I will conduct you to the fountain of Wisdom, in which  
you



## DIALOGUES OF THE DEAD.

you will see, as in your own writings, the fair image of Virtue perpetually reflected. It will raise in you more love than was felt by Narcissus, when he contemplated the beauty of his own face in the unruffled spring. But you shall not pine, as he did, for a shadow. The goddess herself will affectionately meet your embraces, and mingle with your soul.

F E N E L O N.

I find you retain the allegorical and poetical style, of which you were so fond in many of your writings. Mine also ran sometimes into poetry; particularly in my *Telemachus*, which I meant to make a kind of epick composition. But I dare not rank myself among the great poets, nor pretend to any equality in oratory with you the most eloquent of philosophers, on whose lips the Attick bees distilled all their honey.

P L A T O.

The French language is not so harmonious as the Greek: yet you have given a sweetness to it, which equally charms the ear and heart. When one reads your compositions, one thinks that one hears Apollo's lyre, strung by the hands of the Graces, and tuned by the Muses. The idea of a *perfect king*, which you have exhibited in your *Telemachus*, far excels, in my own judgement, my imaginary *republick*. Your *Dialogues* breathe the pure spirit of virtue, of unaffected good sense, of just criticism, of fine taste.

They are in general as superior to your countryman Fontenelle's, as reason is to false wit, or truth to affectation. The greatest fault of them, I think, is, that some are too short.

F E N E L O N.

It has been objected to them, and I am sensible of it myself, that most of them are too full of *common-place morals*. But I wrote them for the instruction of a young prince: and one cannot too forcibly imprint on the minds of those who are born to empire the most simple truths: because, as they grow up, the flattery of a court will try to disguise and conceal from them those truths, and to eradicate from their hearts the love of their duty, if it has not taken there a very deep root.

P L A T O.

It is indeed the peculiar misfortune of princes, that they are often instructed with great care in the refinements of policy; and not taught the first principles of moral obligations, or taught so superficially, that the virtuous man is soon lost in the corrupt politician. But the lessons of virtue you gave your royal pupil are so graced by the charms of your eloquence, that the oldest and wisest men may attend to them with pleasure. All your writings are embellished with a sublime and agreeable imagination, which gives elegance to simplicity, and dig-

## DIALOGUES OF THE DEAD.

nity to the most vulgar and obvious truths. I have heard, indeed, that your countrymen are less sensible of the beauty of your genius and style than any of their neighbours. What has so much depraved their taste?

FENELON.

That which depraved the taste of the Romans after the age of Augustus; an immoderate love of *wit*, of *paradox*, of *refinement*. The works of their writers, like the faces of their women, must be painted and adorned with artificial embellishments, to attract their regards. And thus the natural beauty of both is lost. But it is no wonder if few of them esteem my Telemachus; as the maxims I have principally inculcated there are thought by many inconsistent with the grandeur of their monarchy, and with the splendour of a refined and opulent nation. They seem generally to be falling into opinions, that the chief end of society is to procure the pleasures of luxury; that a nice and elegant taste of voluptuous enjoyments is the perfection of merit; and that a king, who is gallant, magnificent, liberal, who builds a fine palace, who furnishes it well with good statues and pictures, who encourages the fine arts, and makes them subservient to every modish vice, who has a restless ambition, a perfidious policy, and a spirit of conquest, is better for them than a Numa, or a Marcus Aurelius. Whereas to check the excesses of luxury, those excesses I mean  
which

which enfeebles the spirit of anation; to ease the people, as much as is possible, of the burthen of taxes; to give them the blessings of peace and tranquillity, when they can be obtained without injury or dishonour; to make them frugal, and hardy, and masculine in the temper of their bodies and minds, that they may be the fitter for war whenever it does come upon them; but above all to watch diligently over their morals, and discourage whatever may defile or corrupt them; is the great business of government, and ought to be in all circumstances the principal object of a wise legislature. Unquestionably *that is the happiest country which has most virtue in it*: and to the eye of sober reason the poorest Swiss canton is a much nobler state than the kingdom of France, if it has more liberty, better morals, a more settled tranquillity, more moderation in prosperity, and more firmness in danger.

PLATO.

Your notions are just; and if your country rejects them, she will not long hold the rank of the first nation in Europe. Her declension is begun, her ruin approaches. For, omitting all other arguments, can a state be well served, when the raising of an opulent fortune in its service, and making a splendid use of that fortune, is a distinction more envied than any which arises from integrity in office, or publick spirit in government? can that spirit, which is the parent of national



greatness, continue vigourous and diffusive, where the desire of wealth, for the sake of a luxury which wealth alone can support, and an ambition aspiring, not to glory, but to profit, are the predominant passions? If it exist in a king, or a minister of state, how will either of them find, among people so disposed, the necessary instruments to execute his great designs; or rather, what obstruction will he not find, from the continual opposition of private interest to publick? But if, on the contrary, a court incline to tyranny, what a facility will be given by these dispositions to that evil purpose! how will men, with minds relaxed by the enervating ease and softness of luxury, have vigour to oppose it! will not most of them lean to servitude, *as their natural state*; as that in which the extravagant and insatiable cravings of their artificial wants may best be gratified, at the charge of a bountiful master, or by the spoils of an enslaved and ruined people? When all sense of publick virtue is thus destroyed, will not fraud, corruption, and avarice, or the opposite workings of court-factions to bring disgrace on each other, ruin armies and fleets without the help of an enemy, and give up the independence of the nation to foreigners, after having betrayed its liberties to a king? All these mischiefs you saw attendant on that luxury, which some modern philosophers account (as I am informed) the highest good to a state! Time will

will shew, that their doctrines are pernicious to society, pernicious to government; and that yours, tempered and moderated so as to render them more practicable in the present circumstances of your country, are wise, salutary, and deserving of the general thanks of mankind. But, lest you should think, from the praise I have given you, that flattery can find a place in Elysium, allow me to lament, with the tender sorrow of a friend, that a man so superior to all other follies could give into the *reveries* of a madam Guyon, a distracted enthusiast. How strange was it to see *the two great lights of France*, you and the bishop of Meaux, engaged in a controversy, whether a *madwoman* were a *heretick* or a *saint*!

FENELON.

I confess my own weakness, and the ridiculousness of the dispute. But did not your warm imagination carry you also into some *reveries* about *divine love*, in which you talked unintelligibly even to yourself?

PLATO.

I *felt* something more than I was able to *express*.

FENELON.

I had my *feelings* too, as fine and as lively as yours. But we should both have done better to have avoided those subjects in which *sentiment* took the place of *reason*.

## DIALOGUES OF THE DEAD,

## DIALOGUE IV.

Mr. ADDISON—Dr. SWIFT,

DR. SWIFT.

SURELY, Addison, Fortune was exceedingly inclined to play the fool (a humour her ladyship, as well as most other ladies of very great quality, is frequently in) when she made you *a minister of state*, and me *a divine*!

ADDISON.

I must confess, we were both of us out of our elements. But you don't mean to insinuate, that all would have been right, if our destinies had been reversed?

SWIFT.

Yes, I do.—You would have made an excellent bishop; and I should have governed Great Britain, as I did Ireland, with an absolute sway, while I talked of nothing but liberty, property, and so forth.

ADDISON.

You governed the mob of Ireland; but I never understood that you governed the kingdom. A nation and a mob are very different things.

SWIFT.

Ay; so you fellows that have no genius for politicks may suppose. But there are times when, by seasonably putting himself at the head of the mob, an able man may get

at

at the head of the nation. Nay, there are times, when the nation itself is a mob, and ought to be treated as such by a skilful observer.

ADDISON.

I don't deny the truth of your proposition. But is there no danger, that, from the natural vicissitudes of human affairs, the favourite of the mob should be mobbed in his turn?

SWIFT.

Sometimes there may: but I risqued it; and it answered my purpose. Ask the lord lieutenants, who were forced to pay court to me instead of my courting them, whether they did not feel my superiority. And if I could make myself so considerable, when I was only a dirty dean of St. Patrick's, without a seat in either house of parliament; what should I have done, if fortune had placed me in England, unencumbered with a gown, and in a situation that would have enabled me to make myself heard in the house of lords or of commons?

ADDISON.

You would undoubtedly have done very marvellous acts! Perhaps you might then have been as zealous a whig as my lord Wharton himself. Or, if the whigs had unhappily offended *the statesman*, as they did *the doctor*, who knows whether you might not have brought in the pretender? Pray let me ask you one question between you and me. If your great talents had raised you to the office



## DIALOGUES OF THE DEAD,

of first minister under that prince, would you have tolerated the Protestant religion, or not?

SWIFT.

Ha! Mr. Secretary; are you witty upon me? do you think, because Sunderland took a fancy to make you a great man in the state, that he, or his master, could make you as great in wit, as nature made me? No, no; wit is like grace, it must be given *from above*. You can no more get that from the king, than my lords the bishops can the other. And, though I will own you had some, yet believe me, my good friend, it was no match for mine. I think you have not vanity enough in your nature, to pretend to a competition in that point with me.

ADDISON.

I have been told by my friends that I was rather too modest. So I will not determine this dispute for myself; but refer it to Mercury, the God of wit, who fortunately happens to be coming this way, with a soul he has brought to the shades.

Hail, divine Hermes! a question of precedence, in the class of wit and humour over which you preside, having arisen between me and my countryman Dr. Swift, we beg leave—

MERCURY—Dr. Swift, I rejoice to see you—How does my old lad! how does honest Lemuel Gulliver? have you been in Lilliput lately, or in the *flying island*, or with your good nurse Glumdalclitch? Pray when did you *eat a crust with lord Peter*? is Jack as mad still

still as ever? I hear that, since you published the history of his case, the poor fellow, by more gentle usage, is almost got well. If he had but more food, he would be as much in his senses as *brother* Martin himself. But Martin, they tell me, has lately spawned a strange brood of Methodists, Moravians, Hutchinsonians, who are madder than ever Jack was in his worst days. It is a great pity you are not alive again, to make a new edition of your Tale of the Tub for the use of these fellows.—Mr. Addison, I beg your pardon: I should have spoken to you sooner; but I was so struck with the sight of my old friend the doctor, that I forgot for a time the respects due to you.

SWIFT.

Addison, I think our dispute is decided, before the judge has heard the cause.

ADDISON.

I own it is, in your favour;—but—

MERCURY—Don't be discouraged, friend Addison. Apollo perhaps would have given a different judgement. I am a wit, and a rogue, and a foe to all dignity. Swift and I naturally like one another. He worships me more than Jupiter, and I honour him more than Homer. But yet, I assure you, I have a great value for you.—Sir Roger de Coverley, Will Honeycomb, Will Wimble, the country gentleman in the Freeholder, and twenty more characters, drawn with the finest strokes of unaffected wit and humour in your admirable

rable writings, have obtained for you a high place in the class of my *authors*, though not quite so high a one as that of the dean of St. Patrick's. Perhaps you might have got before him, if the decency of your nature and the cautiousness of your judgement would have given you leave. But, allowing that, in the force and spirit of his wit he has really the advantage, how much does he yield to you in all the elegant graces; in the fine touches of delicate sentiment; in developing the secret springs of the soul; in shewing the mildlights and shades of a character; in distinctly marking each line, and every soft gradation of tints, which would escape the common eye! Who ever painted like you the beautiful parts of human nature, and brought them out from under the shade even of the greatest simplicity, or the most ridiculous weaknesses; so that we are forced to admire, and feel that we *venerate*, even while we are *laughing*! Swift was able to do nothing that approaches to this.—He could draw an ill face, or caricature a good one, with a masterly hand: but there was all his power; and, if I be to speak as a *god*, a worthless power it is. Yours is divine. It tends to exalt human nature.

SWIFT.

Pray, good Mercury, (if I may have liberty to say a word for myself) do you think that my talent was not highly beneficial to *correct* human nature? is whipping of no use, to mend naughty boys?

MER-

MERCURY.—Men are generally not so patient of whipping as boys; and a *rough satirist* is seldom known to mend them. Satire, like antimony, if it be used as a medicine, must be rendered less corrosive. Yours is often rank poison. But I will allow that you have done some good in your way, though not half so much as Addison did in his.

ADDISON.

Mercury, I am satisfied. It matters little what rank you assign me as a wit, if you give me the precedence as a friend and benefactor to mankind.

MERCURY—I pass sentence on the *writers*, not the *men*. And my decree is this. When any hero is brought hither, who wants to be humbled, let the task of lowering his arrogance be assigned to Swift. The same good office may be done to a philosopher vain of his wisdom and virtue, or to a bigot puffed up with spiritual pride. The doctor's discipline will soon convince the first, that, with all his boasted morality, he is but a *yahoo*; and the latter, that to be *holy*, he must necessarily be *humble*. I would also have him apply his *anticosmetick wash* to the painted face of female vanity; and his rod, which draws blood at every stroke, to the hard back of insolent folly or petulant wit. But Addison should be employed to comfort those, whose delicate minds are dejected with too painful a sense of some infirmities in their nature. To them he should hold his fair and charitable mirror



## DIALOGUES OF THE DEAD.

rou; which would bring to their sight their hidden excellences, and put them in a temper fit for Elysium.—Adieu: continue to esteem and love each other as you did in the other world, though you were of opposite parties, and (what is still more wonderful) *rival wits*. This alone is sufficient to entitle you both to Elysium.

DIALOGUE V.

ULYSSES—CIRCE. *In CIRCE's Island\*.*

CIRCE.

**Y**OU will go then, Ulysses; but tell me without reserve—what carries you from me?

ULYSSES.

Pardon, goddess, the weakness of human nature. My heart will sigh for my country. It is an attachment which all my admiration of you cannot entirely overcome.

CIRCE.

This is not all. I perceive you are afraid to declare your whole mind. But what, Ulysses, do you fear? my terrors are gone. The proudest goddess on earth, when she has favoured a mortal as I have favoured you, has laid her divinity and power at his feet.

ULYSSES.

It may be so, while there still remains in her heart the tenderness of love, or in her mind the fear of shame. But you, Circe, are above those vulgar sensations.

\* N. B. This cannot be properly called a Dialogue of the Dead. But we have one of the same kind among Cambray's Dialogues, between Ulysses and his companion Grillus, when turned into a boar by the enchantments of Circe; and two or three others, that are supposed to have passed between living persons.

## CIRCE.

I understand your caution; it belongs to to your character: and therefore, to remove all diffidence from you, I swear by Styx, I will do no manner of harm, either to you or your friends, for any thing which you say, however offensive it may be to my love or my pride; but will send you away from my island with all marks of my friendship. Tell me now truly, what pleasures you hope to enjoy in the barren rock of Ithaca, which can compensate for those you leave in this paradise, exempt from all cares, and overflowing with all delights?

## ULYSSES.

The pleasures of virtue; the supreme happiness of doing good. Here I do nothing. My mind is in a palsy: all its faculties are benumbed. I long to return into action, that I may worthily employ those talents, which I have cultivated from the earliest days of my youth. Toils and cares fright not me. They are the exercise of my soul; they keep it in health and in vigour. Give me again the fields of Troy, rather than these vacant groves. There I could reap the bright harvest of glory; here I am hid, like a coward, from the eyes of mankind, and begin to appear contemptible in my own. The image of *my former self* haunts and seems to upbraid me, wheresoever I go. I meet it under the gloom of every shade: it even intrudes itself into your presence, and chides me from your arms. O goddess,

deſs, unleſs you have power to lay that ſpirit, unleſs you can make me forget myſelf; I cannot be happy here, I ſhall every day be more wretched.

CIRCE.

May not a wiſe and good man, who has ſpent all his youth in active life and honourable danger, when he begins to decline, be permitted to retire, and enjoy the reſt of his days in quiet and pleaſure?

ULYSSES.

No retreat can be honourable to a wiſe and good man, but in company with the Muſes. Here I am deprived of that ſacred ſociety. The Muſes will not inhabit the abodes of voluptuouſneſs and ſenſual pleaſure. How can I ſtudy, or think, while ſuch a number of beaſts (and the worſt beaſts are men turned into beaſts) are howling, or roaring, or grunting, all about me?

CIRCE.

There may be ſomething in this: but this, I know, is not all. You ſuppreſs the ſtrongeſt reaſon that draws you to Ithaca. There is another image, beſides that of *your former ſelf*, which appears to you in this iſland; which follows you in your walks; which more particularly interpoſes itſelf between you and me, and chides you from my arms. It is Penelope, Ulyſſes; I know it is.—Don't pretend to deny it. You ſigh for Penelope in my boſom itſelf.—And yet ſhe is not an immortal.



## DIALOGUES OF THE DEAD.

mortal.—She is not, as I am, endowed by nature with the gift of unfading youth. Several years have past since hers has been faded. I might say without vanity, that in her best days she was never so handsome as I. But what is she now?

U L Y S S E S.

You have told me yourself, in a former conversation, when I enquired of you about her, that she is faithful to my bed, and as fond of me now, after twenty years absence, as at the time when I left her to go to Troy. I left her in the bloom of youth and beauty. How much must her constancy have been tried since that time! how meritorious is her fidelity! Shall I reward her with falsehood? Shall I forget my Penelope, who cannot forget me; who has no pleasure so dear to her as the remembrance of me?

C I R C E.

Her love is preserved by the continual hope of your speedy return. Take that hope from her. Let your companions return; and let her know that you have fixed your abode with me, that you have fixed it for ever. Let her know that she is free to dispose as she pleases of her heart and her hand. Send my picture to her; bid her compare it with her own face.—If all this does not cure her of the remains of her passion, if you don't hear of her marrying Eurymachus in a twelve-month, I understand nothing of womankind.

U L Y S S E S.

ULYSSES.

O cruel goddess! why will you force me to tell you truths I desire to conceal? If, by such unmerited, such barbarous usage, I could lose her heart, it would break mine. How should I be able to endure the torment of thinking that I had wronged such a wife? what could make me amends for her being no longer mine, for her being another's? Don't frown, Circe; I must own (since you will have me speak) I must own *you* could not.—With all your pride of immortal beauty, with all your magical charms to assist those of nature, you are not so powerful a charmer as she. You feel *desire*, and you give it: but you have never felt *love*, nor can you inspire it. How can I love one who would have degraded me into a beast? Penelope raised me into a hero. Her love ennobled, invigorated, exalted my mind. She bad me go to the siege of Troy, though the parting with me was worse than death to herself. She bad me expose myself there to all the perils of war among the foremost heroes of Greece, though her poor heart sunk and trembled at every thought of those perils, and would have given all its own blood to save a drop of mine. Then there was such a conformity in all our inclinations! When Minerva was teaching me the lessons of wisdom, she delighted to be present; she heard, she retained, she gave them back to me, softened and sweetened with the peculiar graces of her own mind. When

we unbent our thoughts with the charms of poetry, when we read together the poems of Orpheus, Musæus, and Linus, with what taste did she discern every excellence in them! My feelings were dull, compared to hers. She seemed herself to be the Muse who had inspired those verses, and had tuned their lyres to infuse into the hearts of mankind the love of wisdom and virtue, and the fear of the gods. How beneficent was she, how tender to my people! what care did she take to instruct them in all the finer arts; to relieve the necessities of the sick and aged; to superintend the education of children; to do my subjects every good office of kind intercession; to lay before me their wants, to mediate for those who were objects of mercy, to sue for those who deserved the favours of the crown!—And shall I banish myself for ever from such a comfort? shall I give up her society for the brutal joys of a sensual life, keeping indeed the form of a man, but having lost the human soul, or at least all its noble and godlike powers? Oh! Circe, it is impossible; I cannot bear the thought.

CIRCE.

Be gone—don't imagine that I ask you to stay a moment longer. *The daughter of the sun* is not so mean spirited, as to solicit a mortal to share her happiness with her. It is a happiness which I find you cannot enjoy. I pity and despise you. All you have said seems to me a jargon of sentiments fitter for a  
filly

filly woman than a great man. Go, read, and spin too, if you please, with your wife. I forbid you to remain another day in my island. You shall have a fair wind to carry you from it. After that, may every storm, that Neptune can raise, pursue and overwhelm you!—Be gone, I say; quit my sight.

ULYSSES.

Great goddess, I obey—but remember your oath.



## DIALOGUES OF THE DEAD.

## DIALOGUE VI.

MERCURY—An English DUELLIST—

A North-American SAVAGE.

## THE DUELLIST.

**M**ERCURY, Charon's boat is on the other side of the water. Allow me, before it returns, to have some conversation with the North-American Savage, whom you brought hither with me. I never before saw one of that species. He looks very grimly.—Pray, sir, what is your name? I understand you speak English.

## SAVAGE.

Yes, I learnt it in my childhood, having been bred for some years among the English of New York. But, before I was a man, I returned to my valiant countrymen, the Mohawks; and having been villainously cheated by one of yours in the sale of some rum, I never cared to have any thing to do with them afterwards. Yet I took up the hatchet for them with the rest of my tribe in the late war against France, and was killed while I was out upon a scalping party. But I died very well satisfied: for my brethren were victorious; and, before I was shot, I had gloriously scalped seven men, and five women and children. In a former war I had performed still greater exploits. My name is *the Bloody Bear*: it was given me to express my fierceness and valour.

DUELLIST,

*Bloody Bear*, I respect you, and am much your humble servant. My name is Tom Pushwell, very well known at Arthur's. I am a gentleman by my birth, and by profession a gamester and man of honour. I have killed men in fair fighting, in honourable single combat; but don't understand cutting the throats of women and children.

SAVAGE.

Sir, that is our way of making war. Every nation has its customs. But, by the grimness of your countenance, and that hole in your breast, I presume you were killed, as I was, in some scalping party. How happened it that your enemy did not take off your scalp?

DUELLIST.

Sir, I was killed in a duel. A friend of mine had lent me a sum of money. After two or three years, being in great want himself, he asked me to pay him. I thought his demand, which was somewhat peremptory, an affront to my honour; and sent him a challenge. We met in Hyde Park. The fellow could not fence: I was absolutely the adroiteft swordsman in England. So I gave him three or four wounds; but at last he ran upon me with such impetuosity, that he put me out of my play, and I could not prevent him from whipping me through the lungs. I died the next day, as a man of honour should, without any sniveling signs of contrition or repentance: and he will follow me soon;

K 3

for

## DIALOGUES OF THE DEAD,

for his surgeon has declared his wounds to be mortal. It is said that his wife is dead of grief, and that his family of seven children will be undone by his death. So I am well revenged; and that is a comfort. For my part, I had no wife—I always hated marriage: my whore will take good care of herself, and my children are provided for at the Foundling-hospital.

S A V A G E.

Mercury, I won't go in a boat with that fellow. He has murdered his countryman; he has murdered his friend: I say positively, I won't go in a boat with that fellow. I will swim over the river: I can swim like a duck.

M E R C U R Y.

Swim over the Styx! it must not be done; it is against the laws of Pluto's empire. You must go in the boat, and be quiet.

S A V A G E.

Don't tell me of laws. I am a Savage: I value no laws. Talk of laws to the Englishman: there are laws in his country, and yet you see he did not regard them; for they could never allow him to kill his fellow-subject, in time of peace, because he asked him to pay a debt. I know indeed that the English are a *barbarous nation*; but they cannot possibly be so brutal as to make such things lawful.

M E R C U R Y.

You reason well against him. But how comes it that you are so offended with murder;

der; you, who have frequently massacred women in their sleep, and children in the cradle?

S A V A G E.

I killed none but my enemies: I never killed my own countrymen; I never killed my friend.—Here, take my blanket, and let it come over in the boat; but see that the murderer does not sit upon it, or touch it. If he does, I will burn it instantly in the fire I see yonder. Farewell.—I am determined to swim over the water.

M E R C U R Y.

By this touch of my wand, I deprive thee of all thy strength.—Swim now if thou canst.

S A V A G E.

This is a potent enchanter.—Restore me my strength, and I promise to obey thee.

M E R C U R Y.

I restore it; but be orderly, and do as I bid you; otherwise worse will befall you.

D U E L L I S T.

Mercury, leave him to me. I'll tutor him for you. Sirrah Savage, dost thou pretend to be ashamed of my company? dost thou know that I have kept the best company in England?

S A V A G E.

I know thou art a scoundrel.—Not pay thy debts! kill thy friend who lent thee money for asking thee for it! Get out of my sight. I will drive thee into Styx,

K 4

M E R.



## DIALOGUES OF THE DEAD.

MERCURY.

Stop—I command thee. No violence.—  
Talk to him calmly.

SAVAGE.

I must obey thee.—Well, fir, let me know  
what merit you had, to introduce you into  
good company? what could you do?

DUELLIST.

Sir, I gamed, as I told you.—Besides, I  
kept a good table. I *eat* as well as any man  
either in England or France.

SAVAGE.

*Eat!* did you ever eat the liver of a French-  
man, or his leg, or his shoulder! There is  
*fine eating!* I have eat twenty. My table was  
always *well served*. My wife was esteemed  
the best cook for the dressing of man's flesh  
in all North-America. You will not pretend  
to compare your *eating* with mine?

DUELLIST.

I danced very finely.

SAVAGE.

I'll dance with thee for thy ears.—I can  
dance all day long. I can dance the *war-  
dance* with more spirit than any man of my  
nation. Let us see thee begin it. How thou  
standest like a post! Has Mercury struck thee  
with his enfeebling rod? or art thou ashamed  
to let us see how awkward thou art? If he  
would permit me, I would teach thee to  
dance in a way that thou hast never yet learnt.  
But what else canst thou do, thou bragging  
*rascal?*

DUEL.

## DUELLIST.

O heavens! must I bear this! What can I do with this fellow? I have neither sword nor pistol. And his shade seems to be twice as strong as mine.

## MERCURY.

You must answer his questions. It was your own desire to have a conversation with him. He is not well bred; but he will tell you some truths, which you must necessarily hear when you come before Rhadamanthus. He asked you what you could do besides eating and dancing.

## DUELLIST.

I sang very agreeably.

## SAVAGE.

Let me hear you sing your *death song*, or the *war whoop*. I challenge you to sing.—Come, begin.—The fellow is mute.—Mercury, this is a *liar*—He has told us nothing but *lies*. Let me pull out his tongue.

## DUELLIST.

*The lie given me!*—and alas! I dare not resent it. What an indelible disgrace to the family of the Pushwells! This indeed is *damnation*.

## MERCURY.

Here, Charon, take these two Savages to your care. How far the barbarism of the Mohawk will excuse his horrid acts, I leave Minos to judge. But what can be said for the other, for the Englishman?—The custom of duelling? A bad excuse at the best! but here  
it

## DIADOQUES OF THE DEAD,

it cannot avail. The spirit that urged him to draw his sword against his friend is not that of *honour*; it is the spirit of the Furies, and to them he must go.

S A V A G E.

If he is to be punished for his wickedness, turn him over to me. I perfectly understand the art of tormenting. Sirrah, I begin my work with this *kick on your breech*.

D U E L L I S T.

O my honour, my honour, to what infamy art thou fallen!

D I A.

## DIALOGUE VII.

PLINY THE ELDER—PLINY THE  
YOUNGER.

PLINY THE ELDER.

THE account that you give me, nephew, V.C. Plinii  
Epist. l. vi.  
ep. 20. of your behaviour, amid the terrors and perils that accompanied the first eruption of Vesuvius, does not please me much. There was more of vanity in it than of true magnanimity. Nothing is great that is unnatural and affected. When the earth was shaking beneath you; when the whole heaven was darkened with sulphureous clouds; when all nature seemed falling into its final destruction; to be *reading* Livy, and *making extracts*, was an absurd affectation. To meet danger with courage, is manly; but to be insensible of it, is brutal stupidity; and to pretend insensibility where it cannot be supposed, is ridiculous falseness. When you afterwards refused to leave your aged mother, and save yourself without her, you indeed acted nobly. It was also becoming a Roman, to keep up her spirits, amidst all the horrors of that tremendous scene, by shewing yourself undismayed. But the real merit and glory of this part of your behaviour is sunk by the other, which gives an air of ostentation and vanity to the whole.

PLINY



## DIALOGUES OF THE DEAD.

PLINY THE YOUNGER.

That vulgar minds should consider my attention to my studies in such a conjuncture as unnatural and affected, I should not much wonder. But that you would blame it as such, I did not apprehend; you, whom no business could separate from the Muses; you, who approached nearer to the fiery storm, and died by the suffocating heat of the vapour.

PLINY THE ELDER.

V. Epist.  
16. l. vi.

I died in doing my duty. Let me recall to your remembrance all the particulars; and then you shall judge yourself on the difference of your behaviour and mine. I was the præfect of the Roman fleet which then lay at Misenum. On the first account I received of the very unusual cloud that appeared in the air, I ordered a vessel to carry me out to some distance from the shore, that I might the better observe the phænomenon, and endeavour to discover its nature and cause. This I did as a philosopher; and it was a curiosity proper and natural to an inquisitive mind. I offered to take you with me, and surely you should have gone; for Livy might have been read at any other time, and such spectacles are not frequent. When I came out from my house, I found all the inhabitants of Misenum flying to the sea. That I might assist them, and all others who dwelt on the coast, I immediately commanded the whole fleet to put out, and sailed with it all round  
the

the bay of Naples, steering particularly to those parts of the shore where the danger was greatest, and whence the affrighted people were endeavouring to escape with the most trepidation. Thus I happily preserved some thousands of lives; noting at the same time, with an unshaken composure and freedom of mind, the several phænomena of the eruption. Toward night, as we approached to the foot of Mount Vesuvius, our gallies were covered with ashes, the showers of which grew continually hotter and hotter; then pumice stones, and burnt and broken *pyrites*, began to fall on our heads; and we were stopt by the obstacles which the ruins of the vulcano had suddenly formed, by falling into the sea, and almost filling it up, on that part of the coast. I then commanded my pilot to steer to the villa of my friend Pomponianus, which, you know, was situated in the inmost recess of the bay. The wind was very favourable to carry me thither, but would not allow him to put off from the shore, as he was desirous to do. We were therefore constrained to pass the night in his house. The family watched, and I slept; till the heaps of pumice stones, which incessantly fell from the clouds that had by this time been impelled to that side of the bay, rose so high in the area of the apartment I lay in, that, if I had staid any longer, I could not have got out; and the earthquakes were so violent, as to threaten every moment  
the

the fall of the house. We therefore thought it more safe to go into the open air, guarding our heads, as well as we were able, with pillows tied upon them. The wind continuing contrary, and the sea very rough, we all remained on the shore, till the descent of a sulphureous and fiery vapour suddenly oppressed my weak lungs, and put an end to my life. In all this, I hope that I acted as the duty of my station required, and with true magnanimity. But on this occasion, and in many other parts of your conduct, I must say, my dear nephew, there was a mixture of vanity blended with your virtue, which impaired and disgraced it. Without that, you would have been one of the worthiest men whom Rome has ever produced: for none excelled you in sincere integrity of heart and greatness of sentiments. Why would you lose the substance of glory, by seeking the shadow?—Your eloquence had, I think, the same fault as your manners; it was generally too *affected*. You professed to make Cicero your guide and pattern. But when one reads his panegyrick upon Julius Cæsar, in his oration for Marcellus, and yours upon Trajan; the first seems the genuine language of truth and nature, raised and dignified with all the majesty of the most sublime oratory: the latter appears the harangue of a florid *rhetorician*, more desirous to *shine*, and to set off his own wit, than to extol the great man whose virtues he was praising.

PLINY THE YOUNGER.

I will not question your judgement either of my life or my writings. They might both have been better, if I had not been too solicitous to render them perfect. It is perhaps some excuse for the affectation of my style, that it was the fashion of the age in which I wrote. Even the eloquence of Tacitus, however nervous and sublime, was not unaffected. Mine indeed was more diffuse, and the ornaments of it were more tawdry; but his laboured conciseness, the constant *glow* of his diction, and pointed *brilliancy* of his sentences, were no less unnatural. One principal cause of this I suppose to have been, that, as we despaired of excelling the two great masters of oratory, Cicero and Livy, in their own manner, we took up another; which to many appeared more shining, and gave our compositions a more original air. But it is mortifying to me to say much on this subject. Permit me therefore to resume the contemplation of that on which our conversation turned before. What a direful calamity was the eruption of Vesuvius, which you have been describing! Don't you remember the beauty of that fine coast, and of the mountain itself, before it was torn with the violence of those internal fires, that forced their way through its surface? The foot of it was covered with corn fields and rich meadows, interspersed with splendid villas and magnificent towns: the sides of it were cloathed with the  
best



## DIALOGUES OF THE DEAD.

best vines in Italy. How quick, how unexpected, how terrible, was the change! All was at once overwhelmed with ashes, cinders, broken rocks, and fiery torrents, presenting to the eye the most dismal scene of horror and desolation!

PLINY THE ELDER.

You paint it very truly.—But has it never occurred to your philosophical mind, that this change is a striking emblem of that which must happen, by the natural course of things, to every rich, luxurious state! While the inhabitants of it are sunk in voluptuousness, while all is smiling around them, and they imagine that no evil, no danger, is nigh; the latent seeds of destruction are fermenting within; till, breaking out on a sudden, they lay waste all their opulence, all their boasted delights; and leave them a sad monument of the fatal effects of internal tempests and convulsions.

DIA-

## DIALOGUE VIII.

FERNANDO CORTEZ—WILLIAM PENN.

CORTEZ.

**I**S it possible, William Penn, that you should seriously compare your glory with mine! the planter of a small colony in North-America presume to vie with the conqueror of the great Mexican empire!

PENN.

Friend, I pretend to no glory—the LORD preserve me from it!—All glory is *his*;—but this I say, that I was *his instrument* in a more glorious work than that performed by thee: incomparably more glorious.

CORTEZ.

Dost thou not know, William Penn, that, with less than six hundred Spanish foot, eighteen horse, and a few small pieces of cannon, I fought and defeated innumerable armies of very brave men; dethroned an emperor, who had been raised to the throne by his valour, and excelled all his countrymen in the science of war, as much as they excelled all the rest of the West India nations? that I made him my prisoner, in his own capital; and, after he had been deposed and slain by his subjects, vanquished and took Guatimozin, his successor, and accomplished my conquest of the whole empire of Mexico,

VOL. II.

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## DIALOGUES OF THE DEAD.

which I loyally annexed to the Spanish crown? Dost thou not know, that, in doing these wonderful acts, I shewed as much courage as Alexander the Great, as much prudence as Cæsar? that, by my policy, I ranged under my banners the powerful commonwealth of Tlascala, and brought them to assist me in subduing the Mexicans, though with the loss of their own beloved independence? and that, to consummate my glory, when the governor of Cuba, Velasquez, would have taken my command from me, and sacrificed me to his envy and jealousy, I drew from him all his forces, and joined them to my own, shewing myself as superior to all other Spaniards as I was to the Indians?

PENN.

I know very well that thou wast as fierce as a lion, and as subtle as a serpent. The devil, perhaps, may place thee as high *in his black list of heroes* as Alexander or Cæsar. It is not my business to interfere with him in settling thy rank. But hark thee, friend Cortez—What right hadst thou, or had the king of Spain himself, to the Mexican empire? Answer me that, if thou canst.

CORTEZ.

The pope gave it to my master.

PENN.

The devil offered to give our LORD all the kingdoms of the earth; and I suppose the pope, as *his vicar*, gave thy master this: in return for which, he *fell down and worshiped*  
him,

## D I A L O G U E   V I I I .

147

*him*, like an idolater as he was. But suppose the high priest of Mexico had taken it into his head to give Spain to Motezuma, would his grant have been good?

C O R T E Z .

These are questions of casuistry, which it is not the business of a soldier to decide. We leave that to gownsmen. But pray, Mr. Penn, what right had you to the province you settled?

P E N N .

An honest right of fair purchase. We gave the native savages some things they wanted, and they in return gave us lands they did not want. All was amicably agreed on, not a drop of blood shed to stain our acquisition.

C O R T E Z .

I am afraid there was a little *fraud* in the purchase. Thy followers, William Penn, are said to think cheating in a quiet and sober way no mortal sin.

P E N N .

The saints are always calumniated by the ungodly. But it was a sight which an angel might contemplate with delight, to behold the colony I settled! to see us living with the Indians like innocent lambs, and taming the ferocity of their barbarous manners by the gentleness of ours! to see the whole country, which before was an uncultivated wilderness, rendered as fertile and fair as the garden of God! O Fernando Cortez, Fernando Cortez! didst thou leave the great empire of Mexico



## DIALOGUES OF THE DEAD.

in that state? No, thou hadst turned those delightful and populous regions into a desert, a desert flooded with blood. Dost thou not remember that most infernal scene, when the noble emperor Guatimozin was stretched out by thy soldiers upon hot burning coals, to make him discover into what part of the lake of Mexico he had thrown the royal treasures? are not his groans ever sounding in the ears of thy conscience? do not they rend thy hard heart, and strike thee with more horror than the yells of the Furies?

CORTÉZ.

Alas! I was not present when that dire act was done. Had I been there, I would have forbidden it. My nature was mild.

PENN.

Thou wast the captain of that band of robbers who did this horrid deed. The advantage they had drawn from thy counsels and conduct enabled them to commit it: and thy skill saved them afterward from the vengeance that was due to enormous a crime. The enraged Mexicans would have properly punished them for it, if they had not had thee for their general, thou *lieutenant of Satan!*

CORTÉZ:

The *saints* I find can rail, William Penn. But how do you hope to preserve this *admirable* colony which you have settled? Your people, you tell me, live *like innocent lambs*. Are there no *wolves* in North America, to devour those *lambs*? But, if the Americans should

should continue in perpetual peace with all your successors there, the French will not. Are the inhabitants of Pennsylvania to make war against *them* with prayers and preaching? If so, that garden of God, which you say you have planted, will undoubtedly be their prey; and they will take from you your property, your laws, and your religion.

PENN.

The LORD's will be done! The LORD will defend us against the rage of our enemies, if it be his good pleasure.

CORTEZ.

Is this the wisdom of a great legislator? I have heard some of your countrymen compare you to Solon! Did Solon, think you, give laws to a people, and leave those laws and that people at the mercy of every invader? The first business of legislature is, to provide a military strength that may defend the whole system. If a house be built in a land of robbers, without a gate to shut, or a bolt or bar to secure it, what avails it how well-proportioned, or how commodious, the architecture of it may be? Is it richly furnished within? the more it will tempt the hands of violence and of rapine to seize its wealth. The world, William Penn, is all a land of robbers. Any state or commonwealth erected therein must be well fenced and secured by good military institutions; or, the happier it is in all other respects, the greater will be its danger, the

## DIALOGUES OF THE DEAD.

more speedy its destruction. Perhaps the neighbouring English colonies may for a while protect yours: but that precarious security cannot always preserve you. Your plan of government must be changed, or your colony will be lost. What I have said is also applicable to Great Britain itself. If an encrease of its wealth be not accompanied with an encrease of its force, that wealth will become the prey of some of the neighbouring nations, in which the martial spirit is more prevalent than the commercial. And whatever praise may be due to its civil institutions, if they are not guarded by a wise system of military policy, they will be found of no value, being unable to prevent their own dissolution.

PENN.

These are suggestions of human wisdom. The doctrines I held were *inspired*; they came from above.

CORTEZ.

It is blasphemy to say, *that any folly could come from the Fountain of Wisdom*. Whatever is inconsistent with the great laws of nature, and with the necessary state of human society, cannot possibly have been inspired by God. Self-defence is as necessary to nations as to men. And shall particulars have a right which nations have not? True religion, William Penn, is the perfection of reason. Fana-ticism is the disgrace, the destruction, of reason.

PENN.

PENN.

Though what thou sayest should be true, it does not come well from thy mouth. A *Papist* talk of *reason*! Go to the Inquisition, and tell *them* of *reason*, and the *great laws of nature*. They will broil thee, as thy soldiers broiled the unhappy Guatimozin. Why dost thou turn pale? Is it the name of the Inquisition, or the name of Guatimozin, that troubles and affrights thee? O wretched man! who madest thyself a voluntary instrument to carry into a new-discovered world that hellish tribunal! Tremble and shake, when thou thinkest, that every murder the inquisitors have committed, every torture they have inflicted, on the innocent Indians, is originally owing to thee. Thou must answer to God for all their inhumanity, for all their injustice. What wouldst thou give, to part with the renown of thy conquests, and to have a conscience as pure and undisturbed as mine?

CORTEZ.

I feel the force of thy words. They pierce me like daggers. I can never, never be happy, while I retain any memory of the ills I have caused.—Yet I thought I did right. I thought I laboured to advance the glory of God, and propagate in the remotest parts of the earth his holy Religion. He will be merciful to well-designing and pious error. Thou also wilt have need of

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## DIALOGUES OF THE DEAD.

that gracious indulgence ; though not, I own, so much as I.

PENN.

Ask thy heart, whether ambition were not thy real motive, and zeal the pretence ?

CORTÉZ.

Ask thine, whether thy zeal had no worldly views, and whether thou didst believe all the nonsense of the sect, at the head of which thou wast pleased to become a legislator. Adieu !—Self-examination requires retirement.

DIA

## DIALOGUE IX.

MARCUS PORTIUS CATO — MESSALLA  
CORVINUS.

CATO.

**O**H, Messalla!—is it then possible that what some of our countrymen tell me should be true? Is it possible that you could live the courtier of Octavius, that you could accept of employments and honours from him, from the tyrant of your country; you, the brave, the noble-minded, the virtuous Messalla; you, whom, I remember, my son-in-law Brutus has frequently extolled, as the most promising youth in Rome, tutored by philosophy, trained up in arms, scorning all those soft, effeminate pleasures, that reconcile men to an easy and indolent servitude, fit for all the roughest tasks of honour and virtue, fit to live or to *die* a freeman?

MESSALLA.

Marcus Cato, I revere both your life and your death; but the last, permit me to tell you, did no good to your country; and the former would have done more, if you could have mitigated a little the sternness of your virtue, I will not say of your pride. For my own part, I adhered with constant integrity and unwearied zeal to the republick, while the republick existed. I fought for her at  
Philippi,

## DIALOGUES OF THE DEAD.

Philippi, under the only commander, who, if he had conquered, would have conquered for her, not for himself. When he was dead, I saw that nothing remained to my country but *the choice of a master*. I chose *the best*.

C A T O.

The best!—What! a man who had broken all laws, who had violated all trusts, who had led the armies of the commonwealth against Antony, and then joined with him and that sottish traitor Lepidus, to set up a Triumvirate more execrable by far than either of the former; who shed the best blood in Rome by an inhuman proscription; murdered even his own guardian; murdered Cicero, to whose confidence, too improvidently given, he owed all his power! Was this the master you chose? could you bring your tongue to give him the name of *Augustus*? could you stoop to beg consulships and triumphs from him? O shame to virtue! O degeneracy of Rome! To what infamy are her sons, her noblest sons, fallen! The thought of it pains me more than the wound that I died of: it stabs my soul.

M E S S A L L A.

Moderate, Cato, the vehemence of your indignation. There has always been too much passion mixed with your virtue. The enthusiasm you are possessed with is a noble one; but it disturbs your judgement. Hear me with patience, and with the tranquillity that becomes a philosopher. It is true, that  
Octavius

OCTAVIUS had done all you have said : but it is no less true, that in our circumstances he was the best master Rome could chuse. His mind was fitted by nature for empire. His understanding was clear and strong. His passions were cool, and under the absolute command of his reason. His name gave him an authority over the troops and the people, which no other Roman could possess in an equal degree. He used that authority to restrain the excesses of both, which it was no longer in the power of the senate to repress, nor of any other general or magistrate in the state. He restored discipline in our armies, the first means of salvation, without which no legal government could have been formed or supported. He avoided all odious and invidious names. He maintained and respected those which time and long habits had endeared to the Roman people. He permitted a generous liberty of speech. He treated the nobles of Pompey's party as well as those of his father's ; if they did not themselves, for factious purposes, keep up the distinction. He formed a plan of government, moderate, decent, respectable, which left the senate its majesty, and some of its power. He restored vigour and spirit to the laws ; he made new and good ones for the reformation of manners ; he enforced their execution ; he governed the empire with lenity, justice, and glory : he humbled the pride of the Parthians ; he broke the fierceness of the barbarous nations :  
he



## DIALOGUES OF THE DEAD.

he gave to his country, exhausted and languishing with the great loss of blood which she had sustained in the course of so many civil wars, the blessing of peace; a blessing which was become so necessary for her, that without it she could enjoy no other. In doing these things, I acknowledge, he had my assistance. I am prouder of it, and I think I can justify myself more effectually to my country, than if I had died by my own hand at Philippi. Believe me, Cato, it is better *to do some good*, than to *project a great deal*. A little practical virtue is of more use to society than the most sublime theory, or the best principles of government ill applied.

C A T O.

Yet I must think it was beneath the character of Messalla to join in supporting a government, which, though coloured and mitigated, was still a tyranny. Had you not better have gone into a voluntary exile, where you would not have seen the face of the tyrant, and where you might have quietly practised those private virtues, which are all that the gods require from good men in certain situations?

M E S S A L L A.

No:—I did much more good by continuing at Rome. Had Augustus required of me any thing base, any thing servile, I would have gone into exile, I would have died, rather than do it.—But he respected my virtue, he respected my dignity: he treated me as well as Agrippa or as Mæcenas; with this distinction

tion alone, that he never employed my sword but against foreign nations, or the old enemies of the republick.

C A T O.

It must, I own, have been a pleasure to be employed against Antony, that monster of vice, who plotted the ruin of liberty, and the raising of himself to sovereign power, amid the riot of Bacchanals, and in the embraces of harlots: who, when he had attained to that power, delivered it up to a lascivious queen, and would have made an Ægyptian strumpet the mistress of Rome, if the battle of Actium had not saved us from *that last of misfortunes*.

M E S S A L L A.

In that battle I had a considerable share. So I had in encouraging the liberal arts and sciences, which Augustus protected. Under his judicious patronage, the Muses made Rome their capital seat. It would have pleased you to have known Virgil, Horace, Tibullus, Ovid, Livy, and many more, whose names will be illustrious to all generations.

C A T O.

I understand you, Messalla. Your Augustus and you, after the ruin of our liberty, made Rome a Greek city, an academy of fine wits, another Athens under the government of Demetrius Phalareus. I would much rather have seen her under Fabricius and Curius, and her other honest old consuls, who could not read.

M E S.

## DIALOGUES OF THE DEAD,

MESSALLA.

Yet to these writers she will owe as much of her glory as she did to those heroes. I could say more, a great deal more, on the happiness of the mild dominion of Augustus. I might even add, that the vast extent of the empire, the factions of the nobility, and the corruption of the people, which no laws under the ordinary magistrates of the state were able to restrain, seemed necessary to require some change in the government: that Cato himself, had he remained upon earth, could have done us no good, unless he would have yielded to become *our prince*. But I see you consider me as a deserter from the republick, and an apologist for a tyrant. I therefore leave you to the company of those ancient Romans, for whose society you were always much fitter than for that of your contemporaries. Cato should have lived with Fabricius and Curius, not with Pompey and Cæsar.

DIA-

## DIALOGUE X.

CHRISTINA, Queen of Sweden—  
Chancellor OXENSTIERN.

CHRISTINA.

**Y**OU seem to avoid me, Oxenstiern; and, now we are met, you don't pay me the reverence that is due to your queen! Have you forgotten that I was your sovereign?

OXENSTIERN.

I am not your subject here, madam; but you have forgotten, that you yourself broke that bond, and freed me from my allegiance, many years before you died, by abdicating the crown, against my advice and the inclination of your people. Reverence here is paid only to virtue.

CHRISTINA.

I see you would mortify me, if it were in your power, for acting against your advice. But my fame does not depend upon your judgement. All Europe admitted the greatness of my mind in resigning a crown, to dedicate myself entirely to the love of the sciences and the fine arts: things of which you had no taste in barbarous Sweden, the realm of Goths and Vandals.

OXEN-



## DIALOGUES OF THE DEAD:

OXENSTIERN.

There is hardly any mind *too great* for a crown ; but there are many *too little*. Are you sure, madam, it was magnanimity, that caused you to fly from the government of a kingdom, which your ancestors, and particularly your heroic father Gustavus, had ruled with so much glory ?

CHRISTINA.

Am I sure of it ? Yes :——and, to confirm my own judgement, I have that of many learned men and *beaux esprits* of all countries, who have celebrated my action as the perfection of heroism.

OXENSTIERN.

Those *beaux esprits* judged according to their predominant passion. I have heard young ladies express their admiration of Mark Antony, for heroically leaving his fleet at the battle of Actium, to follow his mistress. Your passion for literature had the same effect upon you. But why did not you indulge it in a manner more becoming your birth and rank ? why did not you bring the Muses to Sweden, instead of deserting that kingdom to seek them in Rome ? For a prince to encourage and protect arts and sciences, and more especially to instruct an illiterate people, and inspire them with knowledge, politeness, and fine taste, is indeed an act of true greatness.

CHRISTINA.

CHRISTINA.

The Swedes were too gross to be refined by any culture which I could have given to their dull, their half-frozen souls. Wit and genius require the influence of a more southern climate.

OXENSTIERN.

The Swedes too gross! No, madam: not even the Russians are too gross to be refined, if they had a prince to instruct them.

CHRISTINA.

It was too tedious a work for the vivacity of my temper, to polish bears into men: I should have died of the spleen before I had made any proficiency in it. My desire was, to shine among those who were qualified to judge of my talents. At Paris, at Rome, I had the glory of shewing the French and Italian wits, that the North could produce *one* not inferior to them. They beheld me with wonder. The homage I had received in my palace at Stockholm was paid to my dignity: that which I drew from the French and Roman academies was paid to my talents. How much more glorious, how much more delightful to an elegant and rational mind, was the latter than the former! Could you once have felt the joy, the transport of my heart, when I saw the greatest authors, and all the celebrated artists, in the most learned and civilized countries of Europe, bringing their works to me, and submitting the merit of them to my decisions; when I saw the philosophers,

## DIALOGUES OF THE DEAD.

the rhetoricians, the poets, making my judgement the standard of their reputation; you would not wonder that I preferred the empire of wit to any other empire.

OXENSTIERN.

O great Gustavus! my ever honoured, my adored master! O greatest of kings, greatest in valour, in virtue, in wisdom, with what indignation must thy soul, enthroned in heaven, have looked down on thy unworthy, thy degenerate daughter! with what shame must thou have seen her rambling about from court to court, deprived of her royal dignity, debased into a pedant, a witling, a smatterer in sculpture and painting, reduced to beg or buy flattery from each needy rhetorician, or hireling poet? I weep to think on this stain, this dishonourable stain, to thy illustrious blood! And yet—would to God! would to God! this were all the pollution it has suffered!

CHRISTINA.

Darest thou, Oxenstiern, impute any blemish to my honour?

OXENSTIERN.

Madam, the world will scarcely respect the frailties of queens when they are on their thrones; much less when they have voluntarily degraded themselves to the level of the vulgar. And if scandalous tongues have unjustly aspersed their fame, the way to clear it is not by an *assassination*.

CHRISTINA.

## CHRISTINA.

Oh! that I were alive again, and restored to my throne, that I might punish the insolence of this hoary traitor!—But, see! he leaves me, he turns his back upon me with cool contempt!—Alas! do not I deserve this scorn? In spite of myself, I must confess that I do.—O vanity, how short-lived are the pleasures thou bestowest! I was thy votary: thou wast the god for whom I changed my religion. For thee I forsook my country and my throne. What compensation have I gained for all these sacrifices, so lavishly, so imprudently made? Some puffs of incense from authors, who thought their flattery due to the rank I had held, or hoped to advance themselves by my recommendation, or, at best, over-rated my passion for literature, and praised me, to raise the value of those talents with which they were endowed. But in the esteem of *wise men* I stand very low; and *their esteem alone is the true measure of glory*. Nothing, I perceive, can give the mind a lasting joy, but the consciousness of having performed our duty in that station which it has pleased the Divine Providence to assign to us. The glory of virtue is solid and eternal: all other will fade away, like a thin vapoury cloud, on which the casual glance of some faint beams of light has superficially imprinted their weak and transient colours.



## DIALOGUES OF THE DEAD.

## D I A L O G U E X I.

TITUS VESPASIANUS—PUBLIUS CORNELIUS  
SCIPIO AFRICANUS.

TITUS.

NO, Scipio; I cannot give place to you in this.—In other respects I acknowledge myself your inferior, though I was emperor of Rome, and you only her consul. I think your triumph over Carthage more glorious than mine over Judæa: but in that I gained over love, I must esteem myself superior to you, though your generosity with regard to the fair Celtiberian, your captive, has been celebrated so highly.

SCIPIO.

Fame has been then unjust to your merit: for little is said of the *continence* of Titus; but mine has been the favourite topick of eloquence in every age and country.

TITUS.

It has:—and in particular your great historian Livy has poured forth all the ornaments of his admirable rhetorick to embellish and dignify that part of your story. I had a great historian too, Cornelius Tacitus: but either from the brevity which he affected in writing, or from the severity of his nature, which, never having felt the passion of love, thought

thought the subduing of it too easy a victory to deserve great encomiums, he has bestowed but three lines upon my parting with Berenice, which cost me more pain, and greater efforts of mind, than the conquest of Jerusalem.

SCIPIO.

I wish to hear from yourself the history of that parting, and what could make it so hard and painful to you.

TITUS.

While I served in Palestine under the auspices of my father Vespasian, I became acquainted with Berenice, sister to king Agrippa, and who was herself a queen in one of those Eastern countries. She was the most beautiful woman in Asia; but she had graces more irresistible still than her beauty. She had all the insinuation and wit of Cleopatra, without her coquetry. I loved her, and was beloved: she loved my person, not my greatness. Her tenderness, her fidelity, so inflamed my passion for her, that I gave her a promise of marriage.

SCIPIO.

What do I hear? A Roman senator promise to marry a queen!

TITUS.

I expected, Scipio, that your ears would be offended with the sound of such a match. But consider that Rome was very different in my time from Rome in yours. The ferocious pride of our ancient republican se-

DIALOGUES OF THE DEAD.

nators had bent itself to the obsequious complaisance of a court. Berenicé made no doubt; and I flattered myself, that it would not be inflexible in this point alone. But we thought it necessary to defer the completion of our wishes till the death of my father. On that event, the Roman empire and (what I knew she valued more) *my hand* became due to her, according to my engagements.

SCIPIO.

The Roman empire due to a Syrian queen! Oh Rome, how art thou fallen! Accursed be the memory of Octavius Cæsar, who, by oppressing its liberty, so lowered the majesty of the republick, that a brave and virtuous Roman, in whom was vested all the power of that mighty state, could entertain such a thought! But did you find the senate and people so servile, so lost to all sense of their honour and dignity, as to affront the great genius of imperial Rome, and the eyes of her tutelary gods, the eyes of Jupiter Capitolinus, with the sight of a queen, an Asiatick queen, on the throne of the Cæsars?

TITUS.

I did not.—They judged of it as you, Scipio, judge; they detested, they disdained it. In vain did I urge to some particular friends, who represented to me the sense of the senate and people, that a Messalina, a Poppæa, were a much greater dishonour to the throne of the Cæsars than a virtuous foreign

foreign princeſs \*. Their prejudices were unconquerable ; I ſaw it would be impoſſible for me to remove them. But I might have uſed my authority to ſilence their murmurs. A liberal donative to the ſoldiers, by whom I was fondly beloved, would have ſecured their fidelity, and conſequently would have forced the ſenate and people to yield to my inclination. Berenicé knew this, and with tears implored me not to ſacrifice her happineſs and my own to an unjuſt prepoſſeſſion. Shall I own it to you, Publius? My heart not only pitied her, but acknowledged the truth and ſolidity of her reaſons. Yet ſo much did I abhor the idea of tyranny, ſo much reſpect did I pay to the ſentiments of my ſubjects, that I determined to ſeparate myſelf from her for ever, rather than force either the laws or the prejudices of Rome to ſubmit to my will.

SCIPIO.

Give me thy hand, noble Titus. Thou waſt worthy of the empire ; and Scipio Africanus honours thy virtue.

TITUS.

My virtue can have no greater reward from the approbation of man. But, O Scipio, think what anguiſh my heart muſt have felt, when I took that reſolution, and when I communicated it to my dear, my unhappy

\* The character of Berenicé in this dialogue is conformable to the idea given of her by Racine, not by Joſephus.



## DIALOGUES OF THE DEAD.

Berenicé. You saw the struggle of Masinissa, when you forced him to give up his beloved Sophonisba. Mine was a harder conflict. She had abandoned him, to marry the king of Numidia. He knew that her ruling passion was ambition, not love. He could not rationally esteem her, when she quitted a husband, whom she had ruined, who had lost his crown and his liberty in the cause of her country and for her sake, to give her person to him, the capital foe of that unfortunate husband. He must, in spite of his passion, have thought her a perfidious, a detestable woman. But I esteemed Berenicé: she deserved my esteem. I was certain she would not have accepted the empire from any other hand: and had I been a private man, she would have raised me to her throne. Yet I had the fortitude, I ought, perhaps, to say, the *hardness of heart*, to bid her depart from my sight; depart for ever! What, O Publius, was your conquest over yourself, in giving back to her betrothed lover the Celtiberian captive, compared to this? Indeed *that* was no conquest. I will not so dishonour the virtue of Scipio, as to think he could feel any struggle with himself on that account. A woman engaged to another, engaged by affection as well as vows, let her have been ever so beautiful, could raise in your heart no sentiments but compassion and friendship. To have violated her, would have been an act of brutality, which

which none but another Tarquin could have committed. To have detained her from her husband, would have been cruel. But where love is mutual, where the object beloved suffers more in the separation than you do yourself, to part with *her* is indeed a struggle! It is the hardest sacrifice a good heart can make to its duty.

SCIPIO.

I acknowledge that it is, and yield you the palm. But I will own to you, Titus, I never knew much of the tenderness you describe. Hannibal, Carthage, Rome, the saving of my country, the subduing of its rival—these filled my thoughts, and left no room there for those effeminate passions. I do not blame your sensibility: but, when I went to the capitol *to talk with Jove*, I never consulted him about *love affairs*.

TITUS.

If my soul had been possessed by ambition alone, I might possibly have been a greater man than I was; but I should not have been more virtuous, nor have gained the title I preferred to that of Conqueror of Judæa and emperor of Rome, in being called *the Delight of Humankind*.

D I A-

## DIALOGUE XII.

HENRY Duke of GUISE—MACHIABEL.

GUISE.

**A**VAUNT, thou fiend!—I abhor thy fight—I look upon thee as the original cause of my death, and of all the calamities brought upon the French nation, in my father's time and my own.

MACHIABEL.

I the cause of your death! You surprize me,

GUISE.

Yes:—Your pernicious maxims of policy, imported from Florence with Catharine of Medicis your wicked disciple, produced in France such a government, such dissimulation, such perfidy, such violent, ruthless counsels, as threw that whole kingdom into the utmost confusion, and ended my life, even in the palace of my sovereign, by the swords of assassins.

MACHIABEL.

Whoever may have a right to complain of my policy, you, Sir, have not. You owed your greatness to it; and your deviating from it was the real cause of your death. If it had not been for the assassination of admiral Coligni and the massacre of the Huguenots, the strength and power which the conduct of so able a chief would have given to that party, after the death of your father, its most dangerous

dangerous enemy, would have been fatal to your house: nor could you, even with all the advantage you drew from that *great stroke of royal policy*, have acquired the authority you afterwards rose to in the kingdom of France, but by pursuing my maxims; by availing yourself of the specious name of religion, to serve the secret purposes of your ambition; and by suffering no restraint of fear or conscience, not even the guilt of exciting a civil war, to check the necessary progress of your well-concerted designs. But on the day of the *barricades* you most imprudently let the king escape out of Paris, when you might have slain or deposed him. This was directly against the great rule of my politicks, *not to stop short in rebellion or treason till the work be fully compleated*. And you were justly censured for it by Pope Sixtus Quintus, a more consummate politician, who said, *you ought to have known, that when a subject draws his sword against his king, he should throw away the scabbard*. You likewise deviated from my counsels, by putting yourself in the power of a sovereign you had so much offended. Why would you, against all the cautions I had given, expose your life in a royal castle to the mercy of that prince? You trusted to his fear; but fear, insulted and desperate, is often cruel. Impute therefore your death, not to any fault in my maxims; but to your own folly in not having sufficiently observed them.

GUISE.



## GUISE.

If neither I nor that prince had ever practised your maxims in any part of our conduct, he would have reigned many years with honour and peace, and I should have risen by my courage and talents to as high a pitch of greatness as it consisted with the duty of a subject to desire. But your instructions led us on into those crooked paths, out of which there was no retreat without great danger, nor a possibility of advancing without being detested by all mankind; and *whoever is so has every thing to fear from that detestation.* I will give you a proof of this, in the fate of a prince, who ought to have been your hero, instead of Cæsar Borgia, because he was incomparably a greater man, and, of all who ever lived, seems to have acted most steadily according to the rules laid down by you; I mean Richard III, king of England. He stopped at no crime that could be profitable to him: he was a dissembler, a hypocrite, a murderer in cool blood: after the death of his brother, he gained the crown, by cutting off, without pity, all who stood in his way. He trusted no man any further than helped his own purposes, and consisted with his own safety. He liberally rewarded all services done him; but would not let the remembrance of them atone for offences, or save any man from destruction who obstructed his views. Nevertheless, though his nature thrunk from no wickedness which could serve his

See Machiavel's  
Prince.

his ambition, he possessed and exercised all those virtues which you recommend to the practice of *your prince*. He was bold and prudent in war, just and strict in the general administration of his government, and particularly careful, by a vigorous execution of the laws, to protect the people against injuries or oppressions from the great. In all his actions and words there constantly appeared the highest concern for the honour of the nation. He was neither greedy of wealth that belonged to other men, nor profuse of his own: but knew how to give, and where to save. He professed a most edifying sense of religion, pretended great zeal for the reformation of manners, and was really an example of sobriety, chastity, and temperance, in the whole course of his life. Nor did he shed any blood, but of those who were such obstacles in his way to dominion as could not possibly be removed by any other means. This was a prince *after your heart*: yet, mark his end. The horror his crimes had excited in the minds of his subjects, and the detestation it produced, were so pernicious to him, that they enabled an *exile*, who had no right to the crown, and whose abilities were much inferior to his, to invade his realm, and destroy him.

MACHIAVEL.

This example, I own, may seem to be of some weight against the truth of my system. But at the same time it demonstrates, that  
there

there was nothing so new in the doctrines I published, as to make it reasonable to charge me with the disorders and mischiefs, which, since my time, any kingdom may have happened to suffer from the ambition of a subject, or the tyranny of a prince. Human nature wants no teaching, to render it wicked. In courts more especially there has been, from the first institution of monarchies, a policy practised, not less repugnant than mine to the narrow and vulgar laws of humanity and religion. Why should I be singled out as worse than other statesmen?

## GUISE.

There have been, it must be owned, in all ages and all states, many wicked politicians. But thou art the first that ever *taught the science of tyranny*, reduced it to rules, and instructed his disciples how to acquire and secure it, by treachery, perjuries, assassinations, proscriptions; and with a particular caution, not to be stopped in the progress of their crimes by any check of the conscience, or feeling of the heart; but to push them as far as they shall judge to be necessary to their greatness and safety. It is this which has given thee a pre-eminence in guilt over all other statesmen.

## MACHIAVEL.

If you had read my book with candour, you would have perceived that I did not desire to render men either tyrants or rebels; but only shewed, if they were so, what conduct,  
in

in such circumstances, it would be rational and expedient for them to observe.

## G U I S E.

When you were a minister of state in Florence, if any chemist, or physician, had published a treatise, to instruct his countrymen in the art of poisoning, and how to do it with the most certain destruction to others and security to themselves; would you have allowed him to plead in his justification, that he did not desire men to poison their neighbours; but, if they would use such evil means of mending their fortunes, there could surely be no harm in letting them know what were the most effectual poisons, and by what methods they might give them without being discovered? Would you have thought it a sufficient apology for him, that he had dropped in his preface, or here and there in his book, a sober exhortation against the committing of murder? Without all doubt, as a magistrate concerned for the safety of the people of Florence, you would have punished the wretch with the utmost severity, and taken great care to destroy every copy of so pernicious a book. Yet your own admired work contains a more baneful and more infernal art. It poisons states and kingdoms, and spreads its malignity, like a general pestilence, over the whole world.

MACHIAVEL.



## DIALOGUES OF THE DEAD.

MACHIAVEL.

You must acknowledge at least, that my discourses on Livy are full of wise and virtuous maxims and precepts of government.

GUISE.

This, I think, rather aggravates than alleviates your guilt. How could you study and comment upon Livy with so acute and profound an understanding, and afterwards write a book so absolutely repugnant to all the lessons of policy taught by that sage and moral historian? how could you, who had seen the picture of virtue so amiably drawn by his hand, and who seemed yourself to be sensible of all its charms, fall in love with a *fury*, and set up her dreadful image as an object of worship to princes?

MACHIAVEL.

I was seduced by vanity.—My heart was formed to love virtue. But I wanted to be thought *a greater genius in politicks* than Aristotle or Plato. Vanity, sir, is a passion as strong in authors as ambition in princes; or rather it is the same passion exerting itself differently. I was *a duke of Guise* in the republick of letters.

GUISE.

The bad influences of your guilt have reached further than mine, and been more lasting. But, heaven be praised, your credit is at present much declining in Europe. I have been told by some shades who are lately arrived here, that the ablest statesman of his time, a king, with whose fame the world is filled,

filled, has answered your book, and confuted all the principles of it, with a noble scorn and abhorrence. I am also assured, that in England there is a great and good king, *whose whole life has been a continued opposition to your evil system*; who has hated all cruelty, all fraud, all falseness; whose word has been sacred, whose honour inviolate; who has made the laws of his kingdom the rules of his government, and good faith and a regard for the liberty of mankind the principles of his conduct with respect to foreign powers; who reigns more absolutely now in the hearts of his people, and does greater things by the confidence they place in him, and by the efforts they make from the generous zeal of affection, than any monarch ever did, or ever will do, by all the arts of iniquity which you recommended.

## DIALOGUE XIII.

VIRGIL—HORACE—MERCURY—SCALIGER  
THE ELDER.

VIRGIL.

**M**Y dear Horace, your company is my greatest delight, even in the Elysian fields. No wonder it was so when we lived together in Rome. Never had man so gentle, so agreeable, so easy a wit, or a temper so pliant to the inclinations of others in the intercourse of society. And then such integrity, such fidelity, such generosity in your nature! a soul so free from all envy, so benevolent, so sincere, so placable in its anger, so warm and constant in its affections! You were as necessary to Mæcenas, as he to Augustus. Your conversation sweetened to him all the cares of his ministry; your gaiety cheered his drooping spirits; and your counsels assisted him when he wanted advice. For you were capable, my dear Horace, of counseling statesmen. Your sagacity, your discretion, your secrecy, your clear judgement in all affairs, recommended you to the confidence, not of Mæcenas alone, but of Augustus himself; which you nobly made use of, to serve your old friends of the republican party, and to confirm both the minister and the prince in their love of mild and moderate measures;

measures; yet with a severer restraint of licentiousness, the most dangerous enemy to the whole commonwealth under any form of government.

HORACE.

To be so praised by Virgil, would have put me in Elysium while I was alive.—But I know your modesty will not suffer me, in return for these encomiums, to speak of your character. Supposing it as perfect as your poems, you would think, as you did of them, that it wanted correction.

VIRGIL.

Don't talk of my modesty.—How much greater was yours, when you disclaimed the name of a poet, you whose odes are so noble, so harmonious, so sublime!

HORACE.

I felt myself too inferior to the dignity of that name.

VIRGIL.

I think you did like Augustus, when he refused to accept the title of king, but kept all the power with which it was ever attended. Even in your epistles and satires, where the poet was concealed as much as he could be, you may properly be compared to a prince in disguise, or in his hours of familiarity with his intimate friends: the pomp and majesty were dropped, but the greatness remained.

HORACE.

Well:—I will not contradict you; and (to say the truth) I should do it with no very



## DIALOGUES OF THE DEAD.

good grace, because in some of my odes I have not spoken so modestly of my own poetry as in my epistles. But, to make you know your pre-eminence over me and all writers of Latin verse, I will carry you to Quintilian, the best of all Roman critics, who will tell you in what rank you ought to be placed.

VIRGIL.

I fear his judgement of me was biased by your commendation.—But who is this shade that Mercury is conducting? I never saw one that stalked with so much pride, or had such ridiculous arrogance expressed in his looks!

HORACE.

They come towards us:—Hail, Mercury! What is this stranger with you!

MERCURY.

His name is Julius Cæsar Scaliger, and he is by profession a *critick*.

HORACE.

Julius Cæsar Scaliger! He was, I presume, a *dictator* in criticism.

MERCURY.

Yes, and he has exercised his sovereign power over you.

HORACE.

I will not presume to oppose it. I had enough of following Brutus at Philippi.

MERCURY.

Talk to him a little:—He'll amuse you. I brought him to you on purpose.

HORACE.

HORACE.

Virgil, do you accost him:—I cannot do it with proper gravity: I shall laugh in his face.

VIRGIL.

Sir, may I ask for what reason you cast your eyes so superciliously upon Horace and me? I don't remember that Augustus ever looked down upon us with such an air of superiority, when we were his subjects.

SCALIGER.

He was only a sovereign over your bodies, and owed his power to violence and usurpation. But I have from nature an absolute dominion over the wit of all authors, who are subjected to me as the greatest of criticks or *hypercriticks*.

VIRGIL.

Your jurisdiction, great sir, is very extensive:—and what judgements have you been pleased to pass upon us?

SCALIGER.

Is it possible you should be ignorant of my decrees? I have placed you, Virgil, above Homer; whom I have shewn to be—

VIRGIL.

Hold, sir—no blasphemy against my master.

HORACE.

But what have you said of me?

N 3

SCALIGER.

## DIALOGUES OF THE DEAD.

HORACE.

A short way indeed to universal fame! And I suppose you were very peremptory in your decisions.

SCALIGER.

Peremptory! ay.—If any man dared to contradict my opinions, I called him a dunce, a rascal, a villain, and frightened him out of his wits.

VIRGIL.

But what said others to this method of disputation?

SCALIGER.

They generally believed me, because of the confidence of my assertions; and thought I could not be so insolent, or so angry, if I were not absolutely sure of being in the right. Besides, in my controversies, I had a great help from the language in which I wrote: for one can scold and call names with a much better grace in Latin than in French, or any tame, modern tongue.

HORACE.

Have not I heard, that you pretended to derive your descent from the princes of Verona?

SCALIGER.

Pretended! do you presume to deny it?

HORACE.

Not I indeed:—Genealogy is not my science. If you should claim to descend in a direct line from king Midas, I would not dispute it.

VIRGIL.

SCALIGER.

I have said, *that I had rather have written the little Dialogue between you and Lydia, than have been made king of Arragon.*

HORACE.

If we were in the other world, you should give me the kingdom, and take both the ode and the lady in return. But did you always pronounce so favourably for us?

SCALIGER.

Send for my works, and read them.—Mercury will bring them to you with the first learned ghost that arrives here from Europe. There is instruction for you in them: I tell you of your faults.—But it was my whim to commend that little ode; and I never do things by halves. When I give praise, I give it liberally, to shew my royal bounty. But I generally blame, to exert all the vigour of my censorian power, and keep my subjects in awe.

HORACE.

You did not confine your sovereignty to poets; you exercised it, no doubt, over all other writers.

SCALIGER.

I was a poet, a philosopher, a statesman, an orator, an historian, a divine; without doing the drudgery of any of these, but only censuring those who did, and shewing thereby the superiority of my genius over them all.

N 4

HORACE.



VIRGIL.

I wonder, Scaliger, that you stooped to so low an ambition. Was it not greater to reign over all Mount Parnassus than over a petty state in Italy?

SCALIGER.

You say well.—I was too condescending to the prejudices of vulgar opinion. The ignorant multitude imagine that a prince is a greater man than a critick. Their folly made me desire to claim kindred with the *Scalas* of Verona.

HORACE.

Pray, Mercury, how do you intend to dispose of this august person? You cannot think it proper to let him remain with us.—He must be placed with the demigods; he must go to Olympus.

MERCURY.

Be not afraid.—He shall not trouble you long. I brought him hither, to divert you with the sight of an animal you never had seen, and myself with your surprize. He is the chief of all the modern criticks, the most renowned captain of that numerous and dreadful band. Whatever you may think of him, I can seriously assure you, that, before he went mad, he had good parts and great learning. But I will now explain to you the original cause of the absurdities he has uttered. His mind was formed in such a manner, that, like some perspective glasses, it either diminished or magnified all objects too much; but  
above

above all others it magnified the good man to himself. This made him so proud, that it turned his brain. Now I have had my sport with him, I think it will be charity to restore him to his senses; or rather to bestow, what nature denied him, a sound judgement. Come hither, Scaliger. —By this touch of my caduceus, I give thee power to see things as they are, and among others thyself.—Look, gentlemen, how his countenance is fallen in a moment! Hear what he says:—He is talking to himself.

SCALIGER.

Bless me! with what persons have I been discoursing! with Virgil and Horace! How could I venture to open my lips in their presence? Good Mercury, I beseech you, let me retire from a company for which I am very unfit. Let me go and hide my head in the deepest shade of that grove which I see in the valley. After I have performed a penance there, I will crawl on my knees to the feet of those illustrious shades, and beg them to see me burn my impertinent books of criticism, in the fiery billows of Phlegethon, with my own hands.

MERCURY.

They will both receive thee into favour. This mortification of truly knowing thyself is a sufficient atonement for thy former presumption.

D I A-

## DIALOGUE XIV.

BOILEAU—POPE.

BOILEAU.

**M**R. Pope, you have done me great honour, I am told, that you made me your model in poetry, and walked on Parnassus in the same paths which I had trod.

POPE.

We both followed Horace: but in our manner of imitation, and in the turn of our natural genius, there was, I believe, much resemblance. We both were too irritable, and too easily hurt by offences even from the lowest of men. The keen edge of our wit was frequently turned against those whom it was more a shame to contend with than an honour to vanquish.

BOILEAU.

Yes:—But in general we were the champions of good morals, good sense, and good learning. If our love of these were sometimes heated into anger against those who offended *them* no less than *us*, is that anger to be blamed?

POPE.

It would have been nobler, if we had not been parties in the quarrel. Our enemies observe, that neither our censure nor our praise was always impartial.

BOILEAU:

BOILEAU.

It might perhaps have been better, if in some instances we had not praised or blamed so much. But in panegyrick and satire moderation is insipid.

POPE.

Moderation is a cold *unpoetical* virtue. Mere historical truth is better written in prose. And therefore I think you did judiciously, when you threw into the fire your history of Louis le Grand, and trusted his fame to your poems.

BOILEAU.

When those poems were published, that monarch was the idol of the French nation. If you and I had not known, in our occasional compositions, how to speak to the passions as well as to the sober reason of mankind, we should not have acquired that despotick authority in the empire of wit, which made us so formidable to all the inferior tribe of poets in England and France. Beside, sharp satyrists want great patrons.

POPE.

All the praise which my friends received from me was *unbought*. In *this*, at least, I may boast a superiority over the *pensioned Boileau*.

BOILEAU.

A *pension* in France was an honourable distinction. Had you been a Frenchman, you would have ambitiously sought it; had I been an Englishman, I should have proudly declined



## DIALOGUES OF THE DEAD.

clined it. If our merit in other respects be not unequal, this difference will not set me much below you in the temple of virtue or of fame.

POPE.

It is not for me to draw a comparison between our works. But, if I may believe the best criticks who have talked to me on the subject, my *Rape of the Lock* is not inferior to your *Lutrin*; and my *Art of Criticism* may well be compared with your *Art of Poetry*: my *Ethic Epistles* are esteemed at least equal to yours, and my *Satires* much better.

BOILEAU.

Hold, Mr. Pope.—If there be really such a sympathy in our natures as you supposed, there may be reason to fear, that, if we go on in this manner comparing our works, we shall not part in good friendship.

POPE.

No, no:—the mild air of the Elysian fields has mitigated my temper, as I presume it has yours. But in truth our reputations are nearly on a level. Our writings are admired almost equally (as I hear) for *energy and justness of thought*. We both of us carried the beauty of our *diction*, and the harmony of our *numbers*, to the highest perfection that our languages would admit. Our poems were polished to the utmost degree of correctness; yet without losing their fire, or the agreeable appearance of freedom and ease. We borrowed much from the ancients, though  
you,

you, I believe, more than I: but our imitations (to use an expression of your own) *had still an original air.*

See Boileau's Epigram on himself.

BOILEAU.

I will confess, Sir, (to shew you that the Elysian climate has had its effects upon me) I will fairly confess, without the least ill-humour, that, in your *Eloisa to Abelard*, your *Verses to the Memory of an unfortunate Lady*, and some others you wrote in your youth, there is more fire of poetry than in any of mine. You excelled in the *pathetick*, which I never approached. I will also allow, that you hit the *manner* of Horace, and the *sty delicacy* of his wit, more exactly than I, or than any other man who has written since his time. Nor could I, nor did even Lucretius himself, make *philosophy* so *poetical*, and embellish it with such charms as you have given to that of Plato, or (to speak more properly) of some of his modern disciples, in your celebrated *Essay on Man*.

POPE.

What do you think of my *Homer*?

BOILEAU.

Your *Homer* is the most spirited, the most poetical, the most elegant, and the most pleasing translation, that ever was made of any ancient poem; though not so much in the *manner* of the original, or so exactly agreeable to the *sense* in all places, as might perhaps be desired. But when I consider the years you spent in this work, and how many excellent

excellent original poems you might with less difficulty have produced in that time, I cannot but regret that your talents were thus employed. A great poet, so tied down to a tedious translation, is *a Columbus chained to an oar*. What new regions of fancy, full of treasures yet untouched, might you have explored, if you had been at liberty boldly to expand your sails, and steer your own course, under the conduct and direction of your own genius!—But I am still more angry with you for your edition of Shakespear. The office of an *editor* was below you, and your mind was unfit for the drudgery it requires. Would any body think of employing a Raphael to clean an old picture?

POPE.

The principal cause of my undertaking that task was zeal for the honour of Shakespear: and, if you knew all his beauties as well as I, you would not wonder at this zeal. No other author had ever so copious, so bold, so *creative* an imagination, with so perfect a knowledge of the passions, the humours, and sentiments of mankind. He painted all characters, from kings down to peasants, with equal truth and equal force. If human nature were destroyed, and no monument were left of it except his works, other beings might know *what man was* from those writings.

BOILEAU.

## DIALOGUE XII.

191

BOILEAU.

You say he painted all characters, from kings down to peasants, with equal truth and equal force. I cannot deny that he did so: but I wish he had not jumbled those characters together, in the composition of his pictures, as he has frequently done.

POPE.

The strange mixture of tragedy, comedy, and farce, in the same play, nay sometimes in the same scene, I acknowledge to be quite inexcusable. But this was the taste of the times when Shakespear wrote.

BOILEAU.

A great genius ought to guide, not servilely follow, the taste of his contemporaries.

POPE.

Consider from how thick a darkness of barbarism the genius of Shakespear broke forth! What were the English, and what (let me ask you) were the French dramatic performances, in the age when he flourished? The advances he made towards the highest perfection both of tragedy and comedy are amazing! In the principal points, in the power of exciting terror and pity, or raising laughter in an audience, none yet has excelled him, and very few have equalled.

BOILEAU.

Do you think that he was equal in comedy to Moliere?

POPE.



## DIALOGUES OF THE DEAD.

POPE.

In *comick force* I do: but in the fine and delicate strokes of satire, and what is called *genteel comedy*, he was greatly inferior to that admirable writer: There is nothing in him to compare with the *Misanthrope*, the *Ecole des Femmes*, or *Tartuffe*.

BOILEAU.

This, Mr. Pope, is a great deal for an Englishman to acknowledge. A veneration for Shakespear seems to be a part of your national religion, and the only part in which even your men of sense are fanaticks.

POPE.

He who can read Shakespear; and be cool enough for all the accuracy of sober criticism, has more of reason than taste.

BOILEAU.

I join with you in admiring him as a prodigy of genius, though I find the most shocking absurdities in his plays; absurdities which no critick of my nation can pardon.

POPE.

We will be satisfied with your feeling the excellence of his beauties. But you would admire him still more, if you could see the chief characters in all his best tragedies represented by an actor, who appeared on the stage a little before I left the world. He has shewn the English nation more excellences in Shakespear, than the quickest wits could discern, and has imprinted them on the heart

heart with a livelier feeling than the most sensible natures had ever experienced without his help.

BOILEAU.

The variety, spirit, and force, of Mr. Garrick's action have been much praised to me by many of his countrymen, whose shades I converse with, and who agree in speaking of him as we do of *Baron*, our most natural and most admired actor. I have also heard of another, who has now quitted the stage, but who had filled, with great dignity, force, and elevation, some tragick parts; and excelled so much in the comick, that none ever has deserved a higher applause.

POPE.

Mr. Quin was indeed a most perfect comedian. In the part of *Falstaff* particularly, wherein the utmost force of Shakespear's *humour* appears, he attained to such perfection, that he was not an actor; he was the man described by Shakespear; he was *Falstaff* himself! When I saw him do it, the pleasantry of *the fat knight* appeared to me so bewitching, all his vices were so mirthful, that I could not much wonder at his having seduced a young prince even to *rob* in his company.

BOILEAU.

That character is not well understood by the French. They suppose it belongs, not to comedy, but to farce: whereas the English see in it the finest and highest strokes of wit and humour. Perhaps these different judgments may be accounted for, in some mea-

## DIALOGUES OF THE DEAD.

sure, by the diversity of manners in different countries. But don't you allow, Mr. Pope, that our writers, both of tragedy and comedy, are, upon the whole, more perfect masters of their art than yours? If you deny it, I will appeal to the Athenians; the only judges qualified to decide the dispute. I will refer it to Euripides, Sophocles, and Menander.

P O P E.

I am afraid of those judges: for I see them continually walking hand in hand, and engaged in the most friendly conversation, with Corneille, Racine, and Moliere. Our dramatick writers seem, in general, not so fond of their company: they sometimes shove rudely by them, and give themselves airs of superiority. They slight their reprimands, and laugh at their precepts. In short, they will be tried by *their country* alone; and that judicature is partial.

B O I L E A U.

I will press this question no further.—But let me ask you, to which of our rival tragedians, Racine and Corneille, do you give the preference?

P O P E.

The sublimest plays of Corneille are, in my judgement, equalled by the *Athalie* of Racine; and the tender passions are certainly touched by that elegant and most pathetick writer with a much finer hand. I need not add, that he is infinitely more correct than Corneille, and more harmonious and noble

in his versification. Corneille formed himself entirely upon Lucan; but the master of Racine was Virgil. How much better a taste had the former than the latter in chusing his model!

BOILEAU.

My friendship with Racine, and my partiality for his writings, make me hear with great pleasure the preference given to him above Corneille by so judicious a critick.

POPE.

That he excelled his competitor in the particulars I have mentioned, cannot I think be denied. But yet the spirit and the majesty of ancient Rome were never so well expressed as by Corneille. Nor has any other French dramattick writer, in the general character of his works, shewn such a masculine strength and greatness of thought. Racine is the swan described by ancient poets, which rises to the clouds on downy wings, and sings a sweet, but a gentle and plaintive note. Corneille is the eagle, which soars to the skies on bold and sounding pinions, and fears not to perch on the sceptre of Jupiter, or to bear in his pounces the lightning of the god.

BOILEAU.

I am glad to find, Mr. Pope, that, in praising Corneille, your un into poetry; which is not the language of *sober criticism*, though sometimes used by Longinus.

POPE.

I caught the fire from the idea of Corneille.



## DIALOGUES OF THE DEAD.

BOILEAU.

He has bright flashes ; yet I think that in *his thunder* there is often more *noise* than *fire*. Don't you find him too declamatory, too turgid, too unnatural, even in his best tragedies ?

POPE.

I own I do—Yet the greatness and elevation of his sentiments, and the nervous vigour of his sense, atone, in my opinion, for all his faults. But let me now, in my turn, desire your opinion of our epick poet, Milton.

BOILEAU.

Longinus perhaps would prefer him to all other writers : for he surpasses even Homer in the *sublime*. But other critics, who require variety, and agreeableness, and a correct regularity of thought and judgement, in an epick poem, who can endure no absurdities, no extravagant fictions, would place him far below Virgil.

POPE.

His genius was indeed so vast and sublime, that his poem seems beyond the limits of criticism : as his subject is beyond the limits of nature. The bright and excessive blaze of poetical fire, which shines in so many parts of the *Paradise Lost*, will hardly permit the dazzled eye to see its faults.

BOILEAU.

The taste of your countrymen is much changed since the days of Charles II, when Dryden was thought a greater poet than Milton !

POPE

POPE.

The politicks of Milton at that time brought his poetry into disgrace: for it is a rule with the English; they see no good in a man whose politicks they dislike. But, as their notions of government are apt to change, men of parts, whom they have slighted, become their favourite authors; and others, who have possessed their warmest admiration, are in their turn under-valued. This revolution of favour was experienced by Dryden as well as Milton. He lived to see his writings, together with his politicks, quite out of fashion. But even in the days of his highest prosperity, when the generality of the people admired his *Almanzor*, and thought his Indian Emperor the perfection of tragedy, the duke of Buckingham and lord Rochester, the two wittiest noblemen our country has produced, attacked his fame, and turned the rants of his heroes, the jargon of his spirits, and the absurdity of his plots, into just ridicule.

BOILEAU.

You have made him good amends, by the praise you have given him in some of your writings.

POPE.

I owed him that praise, as my master in the art of versification. Yet I subscribe to the censures which have been passed by other writers on many of his works. They are good criticks; but he is still a great poet. You, Sir, I am sure, must particularly ad-

## DIALOGUES OF THE DEAD.

mire him as an excellent satirist. His *Abraham and Achitophel* is a master-piece in that way of writing; and his *Mac Fleckno* is, I think, inferior to it in nothing but the meanness of the subject.

BOILEAU.

Did not you take the model of your *Dunciad* from the latter of those very ingenious satires?

POPE.

I did—but my work is more extensive than his, and my imagination has taken in it a greater scope.

BOILEAU.

Some criticks may doubt whether the length of your poem were so properly suited to the meanness of the subject as the brevity of his. Three cantos to expose a dunce crowned with laurel! I have not given above three lines to the author of the *Pucelle*.

POPE.

My intention was, to expose, not one author alone, but all the dulness and false taste of the English nation in my times. Could such a design be contracted into a narrower compass?

BOILEAU.

We will not dispute on this point, nor whether the hero of your *Dunciad* were really a dunce. But has not Dryden been accused of immorality and prophaneness in some of his writings?

POPE.

He has, with too much reason: and I am sorry to say, that all our best comick writers  
after

after Shakespear and Jonson, except Addison and Steele, are as liable as he to that heavy charge. Fletcher is shocking. Etheridge, Wycherley, Congreve, Vanbrugh, and Farquhar, have painted the manners of the times in which they wrote, with a masterly hand: but they are too often such manners, that a virtuous man, and much more a virtuous woman, must be greatly offended at the representation.

BOILEAU.

In this respect, our stage is far preferable to yours. It is a school of morality. Vice is exposed to contempt and to hatred. No false colours are laid on, to conceal its deformity; but those with which it paints itself are there taken off.

POPE.

It is a wonderful thing, that in France the *Comick Muse* should be *the gravest lady in the nation*. Of late she is so *grave*, that one might almost mistake her for her sister *Melpomené*. Moliere made her indeed a good moral philosopher; but then she philosophized, like *Democritus*, with a merry laughing face. Now she weeps over vice, instead of shewing it to mankind, as I think she generally ought to do, in ridiculous lights.

BOILEAU.

Her business is more with folly than with vice; and when she attacks the latter, it should be rather with ridicule than invective.

O 4

But



## DIALOGUES OF THE DEAD.

But sometimes she may be allowed to raise her voice, and change her usual smile into a frown of just indignation.

POPE.

I like her best when she smiles. But did you never reprove your witty friend La Fontaine, for the vicious levity that appears in many of his Tales? He was as guilty of the crime of *debauching the Muses*, as any of our comick poets.

BOILEAU.

I own he was; and bewail the prostitution of his genius, as I should that of an innocent and beautiful country girl. He was all nature, all simplicity! yet in that simplicity there was a grace and unaffected vivacity, with a justness of thought and easy elegance of expression, that can hardly be found in any other writer. His *manner* is quite original, and peculiar to himself, though all the *matter* of his writings is borrowed from others.

POPE.

In that *manner* he has been imitated by my friend Mr. Prior.

BOILEAU.

He has, very successfully. Some of Prior's tales have the spirit of La Fontaine's, with more judgement; but not, I think, with such an amiable and graceful simplicity.

POPE.

Prior's harp had more strings than La Fontaine's. He was a fine poet in many different

different ways; La Fontaine but in one. And, though in some of his tales he imitated that author, his *Alma* was an original, and of singular beauty.

BOILEAU.

There is a writer of *heroick poetry*, who lived before Milton, and whom some of your countrymen place in the highest class of your poets, though he is little known in France. I see him sometimes in company with Homer and Virgil, but oftener with Tasso, Ariosto, and Dante.

POPE.

I understand you mean *Spenser*. There is a force and beauty in some of his *images* and *descriptions*, equal to any in those writers you have seen him converse with. But he had not the art of properly *shading* his pictures. He brings the minute and disagreeable parts too much into sight; and mingles too frequently vulgar and mean ideas with noble and sublime. Had he chosen a subject proper for *epick poetry*, he seems to have had a sufficient elevation and strength in his genius to make him a *great epick poet*: but the allegory, which is continued throughout the whole work, fatigues the mind, and cannot interest the heart so much as those poems, the chief actors in which are supposed to have really existed. The Syrens and Circé in the *Odyssey* are allegorical persons; but Ulysses, the hero of the poem, was a man renowned in Greece, which

## DIALOGUES OF THE DEAD.

which makes the account of his adventures affecting and delightful. To be now and then in Fairy-land, among imaginary beings, is a pleasing variety, and helps to distinguish the poet from the orator or historian: but to be always there, is irksome.

BOILEAU.

Is not Spenser likewise blameable, for confounding the Christian with the Pagan theology, in some parts of his poem?

POPE.

Yes; he had that fault in common with Dante, with Ariosto, and with Camoëns.

BOILEAU.

Who is the poet that arrived soon after you in Elysium, whom I saw Spenser lead in and present to Virgil, as the author of a poem resembling the *Georgicks*? On his head was a garland of the several kinds of flowers that blow in each season, with evergreens intermixed.

POPE.

Your description points out *Thomson*. He painted nature exactly, and with great strength of pencil. His imagination was rich, extensive, and sublime: his diction bold and glowing, but sometimes *obscure* and *affected*. Nor did he always know when to *stop*, or what to *reject*.

BOILEAU.

I should suppose that he wrote tragedies upon the *Greek model*: for he is often admitted into the grove of Euripides.

POPE.

POPE.

He enjoys that distinction both as a *tragedian* and as a *moralist*. For, not only in his plays, but all his other works, there is the purest *morality*, animated by *piety*, and rendered more touching by the fine and delicate sentiments of a most *tender* and *benevolent* heart.

BOILEAU.

St. Evremond has brought me acquainted with Waller.—I was surprized to find in his writings a politeness and *gallantry* which the French suppose to be appropriated only to theirs. His genius was a composition, which is seldom to be met with, of the *sublime* and the *agreeable*. In his comparison between himself and Apollo as the lover of Daphné, and in that between Amoret and Sacharissa, there is a *finesse* and delicacy of wit, which the most elegant of our writers have never exceeded. Nor had Sarrazin or Voiture the art of praising more *genteely* the ladies whom they admired. But his epistle to Cromwell, and his poem on the death of that extraordinary man, are written with a force and greatness of manner, which give him a rank among the poets of the first class.

POPE.

Mr. Waller was unquestionably a very fine writer. His Muse was as well qualified as the Graces themselves to dress out a Venus; and he could even adorn the brows of a conqueror



## DIALOGUES OF THE DEAD.

queror with fragrant and beautiful wreaths. But he had some puerile and low thoughts, which unaccountably mixed with the elegant and the noble, like school-boys or mob admitted into a palace. There was also an intemperance and a luxuriancy in his wit, which he did not enough restrain. He wrote little to the understanding, and less to the heart; but he frequently delights the imagination, and sometimes strikes it with flashes of the highest *sublime*.—We had another poet of the age of Charles the First, extremely admired by all his contemporaries; in whose works there is still more affectation of wit, a greater redundancy of imagination, a worse taste, and less judgement: but he touched the heart more, and had finer feelings, than Waller.—I mean Cowley.

BOILEAU.

I have been often solicited to admire his writings by his learned friend Dr. Spratt. He seems to me a great wit, and a very amiable man, but not a good poet.

POPE.

The *spirit* of poetry is strong in some of his odes; but in the *art* of poetry he is always extremely deficient.

BOILEAU.

I hear that of late his reputation is much lowered in the opinion of the English: Yet I cannot but think that, if a moderate portion of the superfluities of his wit were given by  
Apollo

Apollo to some of their modern bards, who write common-place morals in very smooth verse, without any absurdity, but without a single new thought, or one enlivening spark of imagination, it would be a great favour to them, and do them more service, than all the rules laid down in my Art of Poetry, and yours of Criticism.

POPE.

I am much of your mind.—But I left in England some poets, whom you, I know, will admire, not only for the harmony and correctness of style, but the spirit and genius you will find in their writings.

BOILEAU.

France too has produced some very excellent writers, since the time of my death.—Of one particularly I hear wonders. Fame to him is as kind as if he had been dead a thousand years. She brings his praises to me from all parts of Europe.—You know I speak of Voltaire.

POPE.

I do: the English nation yields to none in admiration of his extensive genius. Other writers excell in some one particular branch of wit or science; but when the king of Prussia drew Voltaire from Paris to Berlin, he had a whole Academy of *Belles Lettres* in him alone.

BOILEAU.

That prince himself has such talents for poetry as no other monarch, in any age or country,

## DIALOGUES OF THE DEAD.

country, has ever possessed. What an astonishing compass must there be in his mind, what an heroick tranquillity and firmness in his heart, that he can in the evening compose an ode or epistle in the most elegant verse, and the next morning fight a battle with the conduct of Cæsar or Gustavus Adolphus!

POPE.

I envy Voltaire so noble a subject both for his verse and his prose. But, if that prince will write his own *Commentaries*, he will want no historian. I hope that, in writing them, he will not restrain his pen, as Cæsar has done, to a mere account of his wars; but let us see the politician, and the benignant protector of arts and sciences, as well as the warrior, in that picture of himself. Voltaire has shewn us, that the events of battles and sieges are not the most interesting parts of good history; but that all the improvements and embellishments of human society ought to be carefully and particularly recorded there.

BOILEAU.

The progress of arts and knowledge, and the great changes that have happened in the manners of mankind, are objects far more worthy of a reader's attention than the revolutions of fortune. And it is chiefly to Voltaire that we owe this instructive species of history.

POPE.

He has not only been the father of it  
among

among the moderns, but has' carried it himself to its utmost perfection.

BOILEAU.

Is he not too *universal*? Can any writer be *exact*, who is so comprehensive?

POPE.

A traveller round the world cannot inspect every region with such an accurate care, as exactly to describe each single part. If the outlines be well marked, and the observations on the principal points be judicious; it is all that can be required.

BOILEAU.

I would however advise and exhort the French and English youth, to take a fuller survey of some particular provinces; and to remember, that although, in travels of this sort, a lively imagination is a very agreeable companion, it is not the best guide. To speak without a metaphor, the study of history, both sacred and profane, requires a critical and laborious investigation. The composer of a sett of lively and witty remarks on facts ill examined, or incorrectly delivered, is not an historian.

POPE.

We cannot, I think, deny that name to the author of the Life of Charles the XIIth, king of Sweden.

BOILEAU.

No, certainly.—I esteem it the very best history that this age has produced. As full of



## DIALOGUES OF THE DEAD.

of spirit as the hero whose actions it relates; it is nevertheless most exact in all matters of importance. The style of it is elegant, perspicuous, unaffected; the disposition and method are excellent, the judgements given by the writer acute and just.

POPE.

Are you not pleased with that philosophical freedom of thought, which discovers itself in all the works of Voltaire, but more particularly in those of an historical nature?

BOILEAU.

If it were properly regulated, I should reckon it among their highest perfections. Superstition, and bigotry, and party spirit, are as great enemies to the truth and candour of history, as malice or adulation. To think freely, is therefore a most necessary quality in a perfect historian. But all liberty has its bounds; which, in some of his writings, Voltaire, I fear, has not observed. Would to heaven he would reflect, while it is yet in his power to correct what is faulty, that all his works will outlive him; that many nations will read them; and that the judgement pronounced here upon the writer himself will be according to the scope and tendency of them, and to the extent of their good or evil effects on the great society of mankind!

POPE.

It would be well for all Europe, if some other wits of your country, who give the *ton*  
to

to this age in all polite literature, had the same serious thoughts you recommended to Voltaire. Witty writings, when directed to serve the good ends of virtue and religion, are like the lights hung out in a *pharos*, to guide the mariners safe through dangerous seas: but the brightness of those that are impious or immoral shines only to betray, and to lead men to destruction.

BOILEAU.

Has England been free from all seductions of this nature?

POPE.

No.—But the French have the art of rendering vice and impiety more agreeable than the English.

BOILEAU.

I am not very proud of this superiority in the talents of my countrymen. But, as I am told that the *good sense* of the English is now admired in France, I hope it will soon convince both nations, *that true wisdom is virtue, and true virtue is religion.*

POPE.

I think it also to be wished, that a taste for *the frivolous* may not continue too prevalent among the French. There is a great difference between gathering flowers at the foot of Parnassus, and ascending the arduous heights of the mountain. The palms and laurels grow there; and, if any of your countrymen aspire to gain them, they must

no longer enervate all the vigour of their minds by this habit of trifling: I would have them be perpetual competitors with the English in manly wit and substantial learning. But let the competition be friendly. There is nothing which so contracts and debases the mind as national envy. True wit, like true virtue, naturally loves its own image, in whatever place it is found.

## DIALOGUE XV.

OCTAVIA—PORTIA—ARRIA.

PORTIA.

**H**OW has it happened, Octavia, that Arria and I, who have a higher rank than you in the temple of Fame, should have a lower here in Elysium? We are told, that the virtues you exerted, as a wife, were greater than ours. Be so good as to explain to us what were those virtues. It is the privilege of this place, that one can bear superiority without mortification. The jealousy of precedence died with the rest of our mortal frailties. Tell us then your own story. We will sit down under the shade of this myrtle grove, and listen to it with pleasure.

OCTAVIA.

Noble ladies, the glory of our sex and of Rome, I will not refuse to comply with your desire, though it recalls to my mind some scenes which my heart would wish to forget. There can be only one reason why Minos should have given to my conjugal virtues a preference above yours; which is, that the trial assigned to them was harder.

P 2

ARRIA.



## DIALOGUES OF THE DEAD.

A R R I A.

How! madam; harder than *to die* for your husband! We *died* for ours.

O C T A V I A.

You did, for husbands who loved you, and were the most virtuous men of the ages they lived in; who trusted you with their lives, their fame, their honour. To *outlive* such husbands is, in my judgement, a harder effort of virtue, than to *die for them*, or *with them*. But Mark Antony, to whom my brother Octavius, for reasons of state, gave my hand, was indifferent to me, and loved another. Yet he has told me himself, I was handsomer than his mistress Cleopatra, Younger I certainly was; and to men *that* is generally a charm sufficient to turn the scale in one's favour. I had been loved by Marcellus. Antony said, he loved me, when he pledged to me his faith. Perhaps he did for a time: a new handsome woman might, from his natural inconstancy, make him forget an old attachment. He was but too amiable.—His very vices had charms beyond other men's virtues. Such vivacity! such fire! such a towering pride! He seemed made by nature to command; to govern the world; to govern it with such ease, that the business of it did not rob him of an hour of pleasure! Nevertheless, while his inclination for me continued, this haughty lord of mankind, who could hardly bring his high spirit to treat

treat my brother, his partner in empire, with the necessary respect, was to me as submissive, as obedient to every wish of my heart, as the humblest lover that ever sighed in the vales of Arcadia. Thus he seduced my affection from the manes of Marcellus, and fixed it on himself. He fixed it, ladies, (I own it with some confusion) more fondly than it had ever been fixed on Marcellus. And when he had done so, he scorned me, he forsook me, he returned to Cleopatra. Think who I was:—the sister of Cæsar, sacrificed to a vile Egyptian queen, the harlot of Julius, the disgrace of her sex! Every outrage was added, that could incense me still more. He gave her, at sundry times, as publick marks of his love, many provinces of the empire of Rome in the East. He read her love-letters openly, in his tribunal itself; even while he was hearing and judging the causes of kings. Nay he left his tribunal, and one of the best Roman orators pleading before him, to follow her litter, in which she happened to be passing by at that time. But, what was more grievous to me than all these demonstrations of his extravagant passion for that infamous woman, he had the assurance, in a letter to my brother, to call her *his wife*. Which of you, ladies, could have patiently borne this treatment?

See Plutarch's Life of Antony.

V. Suetonium in Augusto, Cætare.

## DIALOGUES OF THE DEAD.

ARRIA.

Not I, madam, in truth. Had I been in your place, the dagger with which I pierced my own bosom, to shew my dear Pætus *how easy it was to die*—that dagger should I have plunged into Antony's heart, if piety to the gods, and a due respect to the purity of my own soul, had not stopped my hand. But, I verily believe, I should have killed myself; not, as I did, out of affection to my husband, but out of shame and indignation at the wrongs I endured.

PORTIA.

I must own, Octavia, that to bear such usage, was harder to a woman than to *swallow fire*.

OCTAVIA.

See Plu-  
tarch's Life  
of Antony.

Yet I did bear it, madam, without even a complaint which could hurt or offend my husband. Nay, more; at his return from his Parthian expedition, which his impatience to bear a long absence from Cleopatra had made unfortunate and inglorious, I went to meet him in Syria, and carried with me rich presents of cloaths and money for his troops, a great number of horses, and two thousand chosen soldiers equipped and armed like my brother's prætorian bands. He sent to stop me at Athens, because his mistress was then with him. I obeyed his orders: but I wrote to him, by one of his most faithful friends, a letter full of resignation, and such a ten-  
derness

derness for him as I imagined might have power to touch his heart. My envoy served me so well, he set my fidelity in so fair a light, and gave such reasons to Antony why he ought to see and receive me with kindness, that Cleopatra was alarmed. All her arts were employed, to prevent him from seeing me, and to draw him again into Ægypt.—Those arts prevailed. He sent me Plutarch, ubi supra, back into Italy, and gave himself up more absolutely than ever to the witchcraft of that *Circé*. He added Africa to the states he had bestowed on her before; and declared Cæsario, her spurious son by Julius Cæsar, heir to all her dominions, except Phœnicia and Cilicia, which, with the Upper Syria, he gave to Ptolemy, his second son by her; and at the same time declared his eldest son by her, whom he had espoused to the princess of Media, heir to that kingdom, and king of Armenia, nay, and of the whole Parthian empire, which he meant to conquer for *him*. The children I had brought him he entirely neglected, as if they had been bastards.—I wept. I lamented the wretched captivity he was in;—but I never reproached him. My brother, exasperated at so many indignities, commanded me to quit the house of my husband at Rome, and come into his.—I refused to obey him.—I remained in Antony's house. I persisted to take care of his children by Fulvia, the same tender care as of my own. I gave my protection to all his friends



## DIALOGUES OF THE DEAD.

at Rome. I implored my brother not to make my jealousy or my wrongs the cause of a civil war. But the injuries done to Rome by Antony's conduct could not possibly be forgiven. When he found he should draw the Roman arms on himself, he sent orders to me to leave his house. I did so; but carried with me all his children by Fulvia, except Antyllus, the eldest, who was then with him in Egypt. After his death and Cleopatra's, I took her children by him, and bred them up with my own.

ARRIA.

Is it possible, madam? the children of Cleopatra?

OCTAVIA.

Yes, the children of my rival. I married her daughter to Juba, king of Mauritania, the most accomplished and the handsomest prince in the world.

ARRIA.

Tell me, Octavia, did not your pride and resentment entirely cure you of your passion for Antony, as soon as you saw him go back to Cleopatra? and was not your whole conduct afterward the effect of cool reason, undisturbed by the agitations of jealous and tortured love?

OCTAVIA.

You probe my heart very deeply. That I had some help from resentment and the natural pride of my sex, I will not deny. But

# DIALOGUE XV.

217

But I was not become *indifferent* to my husband. I loved the Antony who had been my lover, more than I was angry with the Antony who forsook me and loved another woman. Had he left Cleopatra, and returned to me again with all his former affection, I really believe I should have loved him as well as before.

ARRIA.

If the merit of a wife be to be measured by her sufferings, your heart was unquestionably the most perfect model of conjugal virtue. The wound I gave mine was but a scratch in comparison to many you felt. Yet I don't know whether it would be any benefit to the world, that there should be in it many Octavias. *Too good subjects are apt to make bad kings.*

P O R T I A.

True, Arria; the wives of Brutus and Cecinna Pætus may be allowed to have spirits a little rebellious. Octavia was educated in the court of her brother. Subjection and patience were much better taught there than in our houses, where the Roman liberty made its last abode: and though I will not dispute the judgement of Minos, I cannot help thinking that the affection of a wife to her husband is more or less respectable in proportion to the character of that husband. If I could have had for Antony

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## DIALOGUES OF THE DEAD.

the same friendship as I had for Brutus, I should have despised myself.

OCTAVIA.

My fondness for Antony was ill placed; but my perseverance in the performance of all the duties of a wife, notwithstanding his ill usage, a perseverance made more difficult by the very excess of my love, appeared to Minos the highest and most meritorious effort of female resolution, against the seductions of the most dangerous enemy to our virtue, *offended pride*.

D I A.

## DIALOGUE XVI.

LOUISE DE COLIGNI, Princess of ORANGE.

FRANCES WALSHINGHAM, Countess of Essex  
and of Clanrickard; before, Lady SIDNEY.

## PRINCESS OF ORANGE.

OUR destinies, madam, had a great and surprising conformity. I was the daughter of admiral Coligni, you of secretary Walshingham; two persons who were the most consummate statesmen and ablest supports of the Protestant religion, in France and in England. I was married to Teligni, the finest gentleman of our party, the most admired for his valour, his virtue, and his learning; you to Sir Philip Sidney, who enjoyed the same pre-eminence among the English. Both these husbands were cut off, in the flower of their youth and of glory, by violent deaths: and we both married again with still greater men; I with William Prince of Orange, the founder of the Dutch commonwealth; you with Devereux earl of Essex, the favourite of Elizabeth and of the whole English nation. But, alas! to complete the resemblance of our fates, we both saw those second husbands, who had raised us so high,

See Du  
Maurier  
Memoires  
de Hol-  
lande,  
p. 177, to  
p. 190, and  
Biographia  
Britannica,  
Essex.



## DIALOGUES OF THE DEAD.

high, destroyed in the full meridian of their glory and greatness; mine by the pistol of an assassin; yours still more unhappily, by the axe, as a traitor.

C. OF CLANRICKARD.

There was indeed in some principal events of our lives the conformity you observe. But your destiny, though it raised you higher than me, was more unhappy than mine. For my father lived honourably, and died in peace; yours was assassinated in his old age. How, madam, did you support or recover your spirits under so many misfortunes?

PRINCESS OF ORANGE.

The prince of Orange left an infant son to my care. The educating of him to be worthy of so illustrious a father, to be the heir of his virtue as well as of his greatness, and the affairs of the commonwealth, in which I interested myself for his sake, so filled my mind, that they in some measure took from me the sense of my grief; which nothing but such a great and important scene of business, such a necessary task of private and publick duty, could have ever relieved. But let me enquire in my turn; how did your heart find a balm, to alleviate the anguish of the wounds it had suffered? what employed your widowed hours after the death of your Essex?

C. OF CLANRICKARD.

Madam, I did not long continue a widow: I married again.

PRINCESS

PRINCESS OF ORANGE.

Married again! With what prince, what king, did you marry? The widow of Sir Philip Sidney and of my lord Essex could not descend from them to a subject of less illustrious fame; and where could you find one that was comparable to either?

C. OF CLANRICKARD.

I did not seek for one, madam; the heroism of the former, and the ambition of the latter, had made me very unhappy. I desired a quiet life and the joys of wedded love, with an agreeable, virtuous, well-born, unambitious, unenterprising husband. All this I found in the earl of Clanrickard: and, believe me, madam, I enjoyed more solid felicity in Ireland with him, than I ever had possessed with my two former husbands, in the pride of their glory, when England and all Europe resounded with their praise.

PRINCESS OF ORANGE.

Can it be possible, that the daughter of Walsingham, and the wife of Sidney and Essex, should have sentiments so inferior to the minds from which she sprang, and to which she was matched! Believe me, madam, there was no hour of the many years I lived after the death of the prince of Orange, in which I would have exchanged the pride and joy I continually had, in hearing his praise, and seeing the monuments of his glory in the free commonwealth his wisdom had founded, for any other delights the world

## DIALOGUES OF THE DEAD.

world could give. The cares that I shared with him while he remained upon earth were a happiness to my mind, because they exalted its powers. The remembrance of them was dear to me after I had lost him. I thought, his great soul, though removed to a higher sphere, would look down upon mine with some tenderness of affection, as its fellow-labourer in the heroick and divine work of delivering and freeing his country. But to be divorced from that soul! to be no longer his wife! to be the consort of an inferior, inglorious husband! I would much rather have died a thousand deaths, than that my heart should one moment have conceived such a thought.

## C. OF CLANRICKARD.

Your highness must not judge of all hearts by your own. The ruling passion of *that* was apparently ambition. My inclinations were not so noble as yours, but better suited, perhaps, to the nature of woman. I loved Sir Philip Sidney, I loved the earl of Essex, rather as amiable men than as heroes and statesmen. They were so taken up with their wars and state-affairs, that my tenderness for them was too often neglected. The earl of Clanrickard was constantly and wholly mine. He was brave; but had not that *spirit of chivalry*, with which Sir Philip Sidney was absolutely possessed. He had, in a high degree, the esteem of Elizabeth, but did not aspire to her *love*; nor did he wish  
to

to be the rival of Carr or of Villiers in the affection of James. Such, madam, was the man on whom my last choice bestowed my hand, and whose kindness compensated for all my misfortunes! Providence has assigned to different tempers different comforts. To you it gave the education of a prince, the government of a state, the pride of being called the wife of a hero; to me a *good living husband*, quiet, opulence, nobility, and a fair reputation, though not in a degree so exalted as yours. If our whole sex were to chuse between your consolations and mine, your highness, I think, would find very few of your taste. But I respect the sublimity of your ideas. Now that we have no bodies, they appear less unnatural than I should have thought them in the other world.

PRINCESS OF ORANGE.

Adieu, madam; our souls are of a different order, and were not made to sympathize or converse with each other.

D I A-



## DIALOGUES OF THE DEAD.

## DIALOGUE XVII.

MARCUS BRUTUS — POMPONIUS ATTICUS,

BRUTUS.

**W**ELL, Atticus, I find that, notwithstanding your friendship for Cicero and for me, you survived us both many years, with the same chearful spirit you had always possessed, and, by prudently wedding your daughter to Agrippa, secured the favour of Octavius Cæsar, and even contracted a close alliance with him by your grand-daughter's marriage with Tiberius Nero.

ATTICUS.

You know, Brutus, my philosophy was the Epicurean. I loved my friends, and I served them in their wants and distresses with great generosity; but I did not think myself obliged to die when they died, or not to make others as occasions should offer.

BRUTUS.

You did, I acknowledge, *serve* your friends, as far as you could, without bringing yourself, on their account, into any great danger or disturbance of mind: but that you *loved* them, I much doubt. If you loved Cicero, how could you love Antony? if you loved me, how could you love Octavius? if you  
loved

loved Octavius, how could you avoid taking part against Antony in their last civil war? Affection cannot be so strangely divided, and with so much equality, among men of such opposite characters, and who were such irreconcilable enemies to each other.

ATTICUS.

From my earliest youth I possessed the singular talent of ingratiating myself with the heads of different parties, and yet not engaging with any of them so far as to disturb my own quiet. My family was connected with the Marian party; and, though I retired to Athens, that I might not be unwillingly involved in the troubles which that turbulent faction had begun to excite, yet, when young Marius was declared an enemy by the senate, I sent him a sum of money, to support him in his exile. Nor did this hinder me from my making my court so well to Sylla, upon his coming to Athens, that I obtained from him the highest marks of his favour. Nevertheless, when he pressed me to go with him to Rome, I declined it, being as unwilling to fight for him against the Marian party, as for them against him. He admired my conduct; and, at his departure from Athens, ordered all the presents made to him during his abode in that city to be carried to me. I remind you of this, only to shew that moderation in all contentions of this kind had been always my principle; and that in the instances you men-

Vide  
Cornel.  
Nepot. in  
Vita At-  
tici.

## DIALOGUES OF THE DEAD.

tioned I did not act from any levity or inconstancy in my nature, but from a regular consistent plan of conduct, which my reason convinced me was the wisest I could follow.

BRUTUS.

I remember indeed that you observed the same neutrality between Pompey and Julius Cæsar.

ATTICUS.

I did so—and, that I might be able to do it with dignity, and without the reproach of ingratitude, I never would accept any office or honour from either of those great men; nor from Cicero, though my sister had married his brother; nor from you, Marcus Brutus, whose friendship I thought the greatest honour of my life.

BRUTUS.

Are there no obligations to a good heart, Pomponius, but honours and offices? or could you, by refusing to encumber yourself with these, dissolve all other ties? But, setting aside any considerations of private affection or esteem, how were you able to reconcile your conduct with that which is the ruling principle in the heart of every virtuous man, and more especially a virtuous Roman, *the love of the publick?*

ATTICUS.

The times I lived in were so bad, and the conflict of parties had so little to do in reality with *the love of the publick*, that I thought my virtue much safer and purer by avoiding, than mixing in the fray.

BRU-

BRUTUS.

Possibly, in the dispute between Marius and Sylla, and even in that between Pompey and Cæsar, a virtuous man might see so much to blame on both sides, and so much to fear, whichever faction should overcome the other, as to be justified in not engaging with either. But let me say, without vanity, in the war which I waged against Antony and Octavius, you could have nothing to blame: for I know you approved the principle upon which I killed Julius Cæsar. Nor would you have had any thing to fear if our arms had succeeded; for you knew that my intentions were upright and pure; nor was it doubtful that Cassius was as much determined as I to restore the Republick. How could you then, with any sense of virtue in your heart, maintain an indifference and neutrality between the *deliverers* and the *tyrants* of your country?

ATTICUS.

My answer to this will necessarily require explanations, which my respect to the *manes* of Brutus makes me wish to avoid.

BRUTUS.

In the other world, I loved truth, and was desirous that all might speak it with freedom: but here, even the tender ears of a tyrant are compelled to endure it. If I committed any faults, or erred in my judgement, the calamities I have suffered are a punishment for it.

Q 2 Tell



## DIALOGUES OF THE DEAD.

Tell me then truly, and without fear of offending, what you think were my failings.

ATTICUS.

You said that the principle upon which you killed Julius Cæsar had my approbation. This I do not deny:—but did I ever declare, or give you reason to believe, that I thought it a *prudent* or *well-timed* act? I had quite other thoughts. Nothing ever seemed to me *worse judged* or *worse timed*: and these, Brutus, were my reasons. Cæsar was just setting out to make war on the Parthians. This was an enterprize of no little difficulty, and no little danger. But this unbounded ambition, and that restless spirit, which never would suffer him to take any repose, did not intend to stop there. You know very well (for he hid nothing from you) that he had formed a vast plan, of marching, after he had conquered the whole Parthian empire, along the coast of the Caspian sea and the sides of Mount Caucasus, into Scythia, in order to subdue all the countries that border on Germany, and Germany itself; whence he proposed to return to Rome by Gaul. Consider now, I beseech you, how much time the execution of this project required. In some of his battles with so many fierce and warlike nations, the bravest of all the Barbarians, he might have been slain: but, if he had not, disease, or age itself, might have ended his life, before he could have compleated such an immense undertaking.

V. Plu-  
tarch. in  
Vitâ Jul.  
Cæsar.

dertaking. He was, when you killed him, in his fifty-sixth year, and of an infirm constitution. Except his bastard by Cleopatra, he had no son: nor was his power so absolute, or so quietly settled, that he could have a thought of bequeathing the empire, like a private inheritance, to his sister's grandson, Octavius. While he was absent, there was no reason to fear any violence, or mal-administration, in Italy, or in Rome. Cicero would have had the chief authority in the senate. The prætorship of the city had been conferred upon you by the favour of Cæsar; and your known credit with him, added to the high reputation of your virtues and abilities, gave you a weight in all business, which none of his party left behind him in Italy would have been able to oppose. What a fair prospect was here of good order, peace, and liberty, at home; while abroad the Roman name would have been rendered more glorious, the disgrace of Crassus revenged, and the empire extended beyond the utmost ambition of our forefathers, by the greatest general that ever led the armies of Rome, or, perhaps, of any other nation! What did it signify, whether, in Asia and among the Barbarians, that general bore the name of king, or dictator? Nothing could be more puerile in you and your friends, than to start so much at the proposition of his taking that name in Italy itself, when you had suffered him to enjoy all the power of royalty, and much

## DIALOGUES OF THE DEAD.

more than any king of Rome had possessed, from Romulus down to Tarquin.

BRUTUS.

We considered that name as the last insult offered to our liberty and our laws. It was an ensign of tyranny, hung out with a vain and arrogant purpose of rendering the servitude of Rome more apparent. We therefore determined to punish the tyrant, and restore our country to freedom.

ATTICUS.

You punished the tyrant; but you did not restore your country to freedom. By sparing Antony, against the opinion of Cassius, you suffered the tyranny to remain. He was consul, and, from the moment that Cæsar was dead, the chief power of the state was in his hands. The soldiers adored him, for his liberality, valour, and military frankness. His eloquence was more persuasive from appearing unstudied. The nobility of his house, which descended from Hercules, would naturally inflame his heart with ambition. The whole course of his life had evidently shewn, that his thoughts were high and aspiring, and that he had little respect for the liberty of his country. He had been the second man in Cæsar's party: by saving him, you gave a new head to that party, which could no longer subsist without your ruin. Many, who would have wished the restoration of liberty if Cæsar had died a natural death, were so incensed at his murder, that, meerly  
for

for the sake of punishing *that*, they were willing to confer all power upon Antony, and make him absolute master of the republic. This was particularly true with respect to the veterans who had served under Cæsar: and he saw it so plainly, that he presently availed himself of their dispositions. You and Cassius were obliged to fly out of Italy; and Cicero, who was unwilling to take the same part, could find no expedient to save himself and the senate, but the wretched one of supporting and raising very high another Cæsar, the adopted son and heir of him you had slain, to oppose Antony, and to divide the Cæsarean party. But, even while he did this, he perpetually offended that party, and made them his enemies, by harangues in the senate, which breathed the very spirit of the old Pompeian faction, and made him appear to Octavius and all the friends of the dead dictator no less guilty of his death, than those who had killed him. What could this end in but, that which you and your friends had most to fear, a re-union of the whole Cæsarean party, and of their principal leaders, however discordant the one with the other, to destroy the Pompeians? For my own part, I foresaw it long before the event, and therefore kept myself wholly clear of those proceedings.—You think I ought to have joined you and Cassius at Philippi, because I knew your good intentions, and that, if you should succeed, you designed to restore the common-



wealth. I am persuaded you did both agree in that point; but you differed in so many others, there was such a dissimilitude in your tempers and characters, that the union between you could not have lasted long; and your dissention would have had most fatal effects, with regard both to the settlement and to the administration of the republick. Beside, the whole mass of it was in such a fermentation, and so corrupted, that I am convinced new disorders would soon have arisen. If you had applied gentle remedies, to which your nature inclined, those remedies would have failed; if Cassius had induced you to act with severity, your government would have been stigmatized with the name of a tyranny more detestable than that against which you conspired; and Cæsar's clemency would have been the perpetual topick of every factious oration to the people, and of every seditious discourse to the soldiers. Thus you would have soon been plunged in the miseries of another civil war; or perhaps assassinated in the senate, as Julius was by you. Nothing could give the Roman empire a lasting tranquillity, but such a prudent plan of a *mitigated imperial power*, as was afterward formed by Octavius, when he had ably and happily delivered himself from all opposition and partnership in the government. Those quiet times I lived to see; and I must say, they were the best I ever had seen, far better than those under the turbulent aristocracy

cracy for which you contended. And let me boast a little of my own prudence, which, through so many storms, could steer me safe into that port. Had it only given me safety, without reputation, I should not think that I ought to value myself upon it. But in all these revolutions my honour remained as unimpaired as my fortune. I so conducted myself, that I lost no esteem in being Antony's friend, after having been Cicero's; or in my alliance with Agrippa and Augustus Cæsar, after my friendship with you. Nor did either Cæsar or Antony blame my inaction in the quarrels between them; but, on the contrary, they both seemed to respect me the more for the neutrality I observed. My obligations to the one, and alliance with the other, made it improper for me to act against either: and my constant tenour of life had procured me an exemption from all civil wars by a kind of *prescription*.

BRUTUS.

If man were born to no higher purpose than to wear out a long life in ease and prosperity, with the general esteem of the world, your wisdom was evidently as much superior to mine, as my life was shorter and more unhappy than yours. Nay, I verily believe, it exceeded the prudence of any other man that ever existed, considering in what difficult circumstances you were placed, and with how many violent shocks and sudden changes of fortune you were obliged to contend. But  
*here*

## DIALOGUES OF THE DEAD.

*here* the most virtuous and publick-spirited conduct is found to have been the most prudent, The motives of our actions, not the success, give us *here* renown. And, could I return to that life whence I am escaped, I would not change my character to imitate yours: I would again be Brutus, rather than Atticus. Even without the sweet hope of an eternal reward in a more perfect state, which is the strongest and most immoveable support to the good under every misfortune, I swear by the gods, I would not give up the noble feelings of my heart, that elevation of mind which accompanies active and suffering virtue, for your seventy-seven years of constant tranquillity, with all the praise you obtained from the learned men whom you patronized, or the great men whom you courted,

## DIALOGUE XVIII.

WILLIAM THE THIRD, King of England—

JOHN DE WITT, Pensionary of Holland.

WILLIAM.

**T**HOUGH I had no cause to love you, yet, believe me, I sincerely lament your fate. Who could have thought that De Witt, the most popular minister that ever served a commonwealth, should fall a sacrifice to popular fury! Such admirable talents, such virtues, as you were endowed with, so clear, so cool, so comprehensive a head, a heart so untainted with any kind of vice, despising money, despising pleasure, despising the vain ostentation of greatness, such application to business, such ability in it, such courage, such firmness, and so perfect a knowledge of the nation you governed, seemed to assure you of a fixed and stable support in the public affection. But nothing can be durable, that depends on the passions of the people.

DE WITT.

It is very generous in your majesty, not only to compassionate the fate of a man, whose political principles made him an enemy to your greatness, but ascribe it to the caprice and inconstancy of the people; as if there had been nothing very blameable in his conduct.



## DIALOGUES OF THE DEAD.

duct. I feel the magnanimity of this discourse from your majesty, and it confirms what I have heard of all your behaviour after my death. But I must frankly confess, that although the rage of the populace was carried much too far, when they tore me and my unfortunate brother to pieces, yet I certainly had deserved to lose their affection, by relying too much on the uncertain and dangerous friendship of France, and by weakening the military strength of the state, to serve little purposes of my own power, and secure to myself the interested affection of the burgomasters, or others, who had credit and weight in the faction, the favour of which I courted. This had almost subjected my country to France, if you, great prince, had not been set at the head of the falling republick, and had not exerted such extraordinary virtues and abilities, to raise and support it, as surpassed even the heroism and prudence of William our first stadtholder, and equalled you to the most illustrious patriots of Greece or Rome.

WILLIAM.

This praise from your mouth is glorious to me indeed! What can so much exalt the character of a prince, as to have his actions approved by a zealous republican, and the enemy of his house?

DE WITT.

If I did not approve them, I should shew myself the enemy of the republick. You  
never

never fought to tyrannize over it; you loved, you defended, you preserved its freedom. Thebes was not more indebted to Epaminondas or Pelopidas, for its independence and glory, than the United Provinces were to you. How wonderful was it to see a youth, who had scarcely attained to the twenty-second year of his age, whose spirit had been depressed and kept down by a jealous and hostile faction, rising at once to the conduct of a most arduous and perilous war, stopping an enemy victorious, triumphant, who had penetrated into the heart of his country; driving him back, and recovering from him all he had conquered: to see this done with an army, in which, a little before, there was neither discipline, courage, nor sense of honour? Ancient history has no exploit superior to it; and it will ennoble the modern, whenever a Livy or a Plutarch shall arise, to do justice to it, and set the hero who performed it in a true light.

WILLIAM.

Say, rather, when time shall have worn out that malignity and rancour of party, which, in free states, is so apt to oppose itself to the sentiments of gratitude and esteem for their servants and benefactors.

DE WITT.

How manganimous was your reply, how much in the spirit of true *ancient virtue*, when being asked; in the greatest extremity of our danger,

See Tem-  
ple's Me-  
moirs,  
from the  
year 1672  
to 1679, p.  
259. 320,  
321.

danger, "*How you intended to live after Hol-*  
"*land should be lost?*" you said, "*You would*  
"*live on the lands you had left in Germany; and*  
"*would rather pass your life in hunting there,*  
"*than sell your country or liberty to France at*  
"*any rate!*" How nobly did you think, when,  
being offered your patrimonial lordships and  
lands in the county of Burgundy, or the  
full value of them, from France, by the me-  
diation of England, in the treaty of peace,  
your answer was, "*That, to gain one good*  
"*town more for the Spaniards in Flanders, you*  
"*would be content to lose them all!*" No  
wonder, after this, that you are able to  
combine all Europe in a league against the  
power of France; that you were the centre  
of union, and the directing soul of that wise,  
that generous confederacy, formed by your  
labours; that you could steadily support and  
keep it together, in spite of repeated misfor-  
tunes; that even after defeats you were as  
formidable to Louis, as other generals after  
victories; and that in the end you became  
the deliverer of Europe, as you had before  
been of Holland.

WILLIAM.

I had in truth no other object, no other pas-  
sion at heart, throughout my whole life, than  
to maintain the independence and freedom of  
Europe, against the ambition of France. It  
was this desire which formed the whole plan  
of my policy, which animated all my counsels;  
both as prince of Orange and king of England.

DE WITT.

This desire was the most noble (I speak it with shame) that could warm the heart of a prince, whose ancestors had opposed, and in a great measure destroyed, the power of Spain, when that nation aspired to the monarchy of Europe. France, Sir, in your days, had an equal ambition and more strength to support her vast designs, than Spain under the government of Philip the Second. That ambition you restrained, that strength you resisted. I, alas! was seduced by her perfidious court, and by the necessity of affairs in that system of policy which I had adopted, to ask her assistance, to rely on her favour, and to make the commonwealth, whose counsels I directed, subservient to her greatness.— Permit me, Sir, to explain to you the motives of my conduct. If all the princes of Orange had acted like you, I should never have been the enemy of your house. But prince Maurice of Nassau desired to oppress the liberty of that state, which his virtuous father had freed at the expence of his life, and which he himself had defended, against the arms of the house of Austria, with the highest reputation of military abilities. Under a pretence of religion (the most execrable cover of a wicked design), he put to death, as a criminal, that upright minister, Barneveldt, his father's best friend, because he refused to concur with him in treason against the state. He likewise imprisoned several other good men



## DIALOGUES OF THE DEAD.

men and lovers of their country, confiscated their estates, and ruined their families. Yet, after he had done these cruel acts of injustice, with a view to make himself sovereign of the Dutch commonwealth, he found they had drawn such a general odium upon him, that, not daring to accomplish his iniquitous purpose, he stopped short of the tyranny to which he had sacrificed his honour and virtue: a disappointment so mortifying, and so painful to his mind, that it probably hastened his death.

WILLIAM.

Would to heaven he had died before the meeting of that infamous synod of Dort, by which he not only dishonoured himself and his family, but the Protestant religion itself! Forgive this interruption—my grief forced me to it—I desire you to proceed.

DE WITT.

The brother of Maurice, prince Henry, who succeeded to his dignities in the republic, acted with more moderation. But the son of that good prince, your majesty's father (I am sorry to speak what I know you hear with pain), resumed, in the pride and fire of his youth, the ambitious designs of his uncle. He failed in his undertaking, and soon afterwards died; but left in the hearts of the whole republican party an incurable jealousy and dread of his family. Full of these prejudices, and zealous for liberty, I thought it my duty, as pensionary of Holland, to prevent

vent for ever, if I could, your restoration to the power your ancestors had enjoyed; which I sincerely believed would be inconsistent with the safety and freedom of my country.

WILLIAM.

Let me stop you a moment here.—When my great-grandfather formed the plan of the Dutch commonwealth, he made the power of a stadtholder one of the principal springs in his system of government. How could you imagine that it would ever go well when deprived of this spring, so necessary to adjust and balance its motions? A constitution originally formed with no mixture of regal power may long be maintained in all its vigour and energy without such a power; but, if any degree of monarchy were mixed from the beginning in the principles of it, the forcing *that* out must necessarily disorder and weaken the whole frabrick. This was particularly the case in our republick. The negative voice of every small town in the provincial states, the tedious slowness of our forms and deliberations, the facility with which foreign ministers may seduce or purchase the opinions of so many persons as have a right to concur in all our resolutions, make it impossible for the government, even in the quietest times, to be well carried on, without the authority and influence of a stadtholder, which are the only remedy our constitution has provided for those evils.

VOL. II.

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DE WITT.

I acknowledge they are.—But I and my party thought no evil so great as that remedy; and therefore we sought for other more pleasing resources. One of these, upon which we most confidently depended, was the friendship of France. I flattered myself that the interest of the French would secure to me their favour; as your relation to the crown of England might naturally raise in them a jealousy of your power. I hoped they would encourage the trade and commerce of the Dutch, in opposition to the English, the ancient enemies of their crown, and let us enjoy all the benefits of a perpetual peace, unless we made war upon England, or England upon us; in either of which cases, it was reasonable to presume, we should have their assistance. The French minister at the Hague, who served his court but too well, so confirmed me in these notions, that I had no apprehensions of the *mine* which was forming under my feet.

WILLIAM.

You found your authority strengthened by a plan so agreeable to your party; and this contributed more to deceive your sagacity than all the art of D'Estades.

DE WITT.

My policy seemed to me entirely suitable to the lasting security of my own power, of the liberty of my country, and of its maritime greatness. For I made it my care to keep up  
a very

a very powerful navy, well commanded and officered, for the defence of all these against the English; but, as I feared nothing from France, or any power on the continent, I neglected the army; or rather I destroyed it, by enervating all its strength, by disbanding old troops and veteran officers, attached to the house of Orange, and putting in their place a *trading militia*, commanded by officers who had neither experience nor courage, and who owed their promotions to no other merit than their relation to, or interest with, some leading men in the several *oligarchies* of which the government in all the Dutch towns is composed. Nevertheless, on the invasion of Flanders by the French, I was forced to depart from my close connexion with France, and to concur with England and Sweden in the triple alliance, which Sir William Temple proposed in order to check her ambition: but, as I entered into that measure from necessity, not from choice, I did not pursue it. I neglected to improve our union with England, or to secure that with Sweden; I avoided any conjunction of counsels with Spain; I formed no alliance with the Emperor or the Germans; I corrupted our army more and more; till a sudden unnatural confederacy, struck up, against all the maxims of policy, by the court of England with France, for the conquest of the Seven Provinces, brought these at once to the very brink of destruction, and made



## DIALOGUES OF THE DEAD.

me a victim to the fury of a populace too justly provoked.

WILLIAM.

I must say, that your plan was in reality nothing more than to procure for the Dutch *a licence to trade, under the good pleasure and gracious protection of France*. But any state that so entirely depends on another is only a *province*; and its *liberty* is a *servitude*, graced with a sweet but empty name. You should have reflected, that to a monarch so ambitious and so vain as *Louis le Grand*, the idea of a conquest which seemed almost certain, and the desire of humbling a haughty republick, were temptations irresistible. His bigotry likewise would concur in recommending to him an enterprize, which he might think would put heresy under his feet. And if you knew either the character of Charles the Second, or the principles of his government, you ought not to have supposed his union with France for the ruin of Holland an impossible, or even improbable event. It is hardly excusable in a statesman to be greatly surprized that the inclinations of princes should prevail upon them to act, in many particulars, without any regard to the political maxims and interest of their kingdoms.

DE WITT.

Temple's  
Memoirs,  
from 1672  
to 1679,  
p. 259.  
299.

I am ashamed of my error; but the chief cause of it was, that though I thought very ill, I did not think quite so ill of Charles the  
Second

Second and his ministry as they deserved. I imagined too that his parliament would restrain him from engaging in such a war; or compel him to engage in our defence, if France should attack us. These, I acknowledge, are *excuses*, not *justifications*. When the French marched into Holland, and found it in a condition so unable to resist them, my fame as a minister irrecoverably sunk. For, not to appear a *traitor*, I was obliged to confess myself a *dupe*. But what praise is sufficient for the wisdom and virtue you shewed, in so firmly rejecting the offers, which I have been informed were made to you, both by England and France, when first you appeared in arms at the head of your country, to give you *the sovereignty of the Seven Provinces*, by the assistance, and under the protection, of the two crowns! Believe me, great prince, had I been living in those times, and had known the generous answers you made to those offers, which were repeated more than once during the course of the war; not the most ancient and devoted servant to your family would have been more your friend than I. But who could reasonably hope for such moderation, and such a right sense of glory, in the mind of a young man, descended from *kings*, whose mother was daughter to Charles the First, and whose father had left him the seducing example of a very different conduct? Happy indeed was the English nation, to have such a prince so nearly allied

## DIALOGUES OF THE DEAD.

to their crown both in blood and by marriage, whom they might call to be their deliverer, when bigotry and despotism, the two greatest enemies to human society, had almost overthrown their whole constitution in church and state!

WILLIAM.

They might have been happy; but were not.—As soon as I had accomplished their deliverance for them, many of them became my most implacable enemies, and even wished to restore the unforgiving prince whom they had so unanimously and so justly expelled from his kingdom.—Such levity seems incredible. I could not myself have imagined it possible, in a nation famed for *good sense*, if I had not had proofs of it beyond contradiction. They seemed as much to forget *what they called me over for*, as *that they had called me over*. The security of their religion, the maintenance of their liberty, was no longer their care. All was to yield to the incomprehensible doctrine of *right divine* and *passive obedience*. Thus the *Tories* grew *Jacobites*, after having renounced both that doctrine and James, by their opposition to him, by their invitation of me, and by every act of the parliament which gave me the crown.—But the most troublesome of my enemies were a set of Republicans, who violently opposed all my measures, and joined with the Jacobites in disturbing my government, only because it was not a commonwealth.

DE

DE WITT.

They who were republicans under your government in the kingdom of England did not love liberty; but aspired to dominion, and wished to throw the nation into a total confusion, that it might give them a chance of working out from that anarchy a better state for themselves.

WILLIAM.

Your observation is just. A proud man thinks himself a lover of liberty; when he is only impatient of a power in government above his own, and, were he a king, or the first minister of a king, would be a tyrant. Nevertheless I will own to you, with the candour which becomes a virtuous prince, that there were in England some Whigs, and even some of the most sober and moderate Tories, who, with very honest intentions, and sometimes with good judgements, proposed new securities to the liberty of the nation, against the prerogative or influence of the crown, and the corruption of ministers in future times. To some of these I gave way, being convinced they were right; but others I resisted, for fear of weakening too much the royal authority, and breaking that *balance* in which consists the perfection of a mixed form of government. I should not, perhaps, have resisted so many, if I had not seen in the house of commons a disposition to rise in their demands on the crown, had they found it more yielding. The difficulties of my

R 4

government,



## DIALOGUES OF THE DEAD.

government, upon the whole, were so great, that I once had determined, from mere disgust and resentment, to give back to the nation, assembled in parliament, the crown they had placed on my head, and retire to Holland, where I found more affection and gratitude in the people. But I was stopped by the earnest supplications of my friends, and by an unwillingness to undo the great work I had done: especially as I knew that, if England should return into the hands of king James, it would be impossible, in that crisis, to preserve the rest of Europe from the dominion of France.

DE WITT.

Heaven be praised that your majesty did not persevere in so fatal a resolution! The United Provinces would have been ruined by it together with England. But I cannot enough express my astonishment, that you should have met with such treatment as could suggest such a thought! The English must surely be a people incapable either of liberty or subjection!

WILLIAM.

There were, I must acknowledge, some faults in my temper, and some in my government, which are an excuse for my subjects with regard to the uneasiness and disquiet they gave me. My taciturnity, which suited the genius of the Dutch, offended theirs. They love an affable prince: it was chiefly his affability that made them so fond of  
Charles

Charles the Second. Their frankness and good-humour could not brook the reserve and coldness of my nature. Then the excess of my favour to some of the Dutch, whom I had brought over with me, excited a national jealousy in the English, and hurt their pride. My government also appeared, at last, too unsteady, too fluctuating between the Whigs and the Tories; which almost deprived me of the confidence and affection of both parties. I trusted too much to the integrity and the purity of my intentions, without using those arts that are necessary to allay the ferment of factions, and allure men to their duty by soothing their passions. Upon the whole, I am sensible that I better understood how to govern the Dutch than the English or the Scotch; and should probably have been thought a greater man, if I had not been king of Great Britain.

DE WITT,

It is a shame to the English, that gratitude and affection for such merit as yours were not able to overcome any little disgusts arising from your temper, and enthrone their deliverer in the hearts of his people. But will your majesty give me leave to ask you one question? Is it true, as I have heard, that many of them disliked your alliances on the continent, and spoke of your war with France as a *Dutch measure*, in which you sacrificed England to Holland?

WILLIAM,

## DIALOGUES OF THE DEAD.

WILLIAM.

The cry of the nation at first was strong for the war: but before the end of it the Tories began publicly to talk the language you mention. And no wonder they did;—for, as they then had a desire to set up again the maxims of government which had prevailed in the reign of their beloved Charles the Second, they could not but represent opposition to France, and vigorous measures taken to restrain her ambition, as unnecessary for England: because they well knew that the counsels of that king had been utterly averse from such measures; that his whole policy made him a friend to France; that he was governed by a French mistress, and even bribed by French money, to give that court his assistance, or at least his acquiescence, in all their designs.

DE WITT.

A king of England, whose cabinet is governed by France, and who becomes a vile pensioner to a French king, degrades himself from his royalty, and ought to be considered as an enemy to the nation. Indeed the whole policy of Charles the Second, when he was not forced off from his natural bias by the necessity he lay under of soothing his parliament, was a constant, designed, systematical opposition to the interest of his people. His brother, though more sensible to the honour of England, was, by his Popery and desire of arbitrary power, constrained to lean upon France,

France, and do nothing to obstruct her designs on the continent, or lessen her greatness. It was therefore necessary to place the British crown on your head, not only with a view to preserve the religious and civil rights of the people from internal oppressions, but to rescue the whole state from that servile dependance on its natural enemy, which must unquestionably have ended in its destruction. What folly was it to revile your measures abroad, as sacrificing the interest of your British dominions to connexions with the continent, and principally with Holland! Had Great Britain no interest to hinder the French from being masters of all the Austrian Netherlands, and forcing the Seven United Provinces, her strongest barrier on the continent against the power of that nation, to submit with the rest to their yoke? would her trade, would her coasts, would her capital itself, have been safe, after so mighty an encrease of shipping and sailors as France would have gained by those conquests? and what could have prevented them, but the war which you waged, and the alliances which you formed? could the Dutch and the Germans, unaided by Great Britain, have attempted to make head against a power, which, even with her assistance, strong and spirited as it was, they could hardly resist? and after the check which had been given to the encroachments of France, by the efforts of the *first grand alliance*, did not a new and greater danger  
make



## DIALOGUES OF THE DEAD.

make it necessary to recur to another such league? was not the union of France and Spain under one monarch, or even under one family, the most alarming contingency that ever had threatened the liberty of Europe?

WILLIAM.

I thought so; and I am sure I did not err in my judgement. But folly is blind; and faction wilfully shuts her eyes against the most evident truths that cross her designs; as she believes any lies, however palpable and absurd, that she thinks will assist them.

DE WITT.

The only objection which seems to have any real weight against your system of policy, with regard to the maintenance of a balance of power in Europe, is the enormous expence that must necessarily attend it; an expence which, I am afraid, neither England nor Holland will be able to bear without extreme inconvenience.

WILLIAM.

I will answer that objection, by asking a question. If, when you was pensionary of Holland, intelligence had been brought, that the dykes were ready to break, and the sea was coming in, to overwhelm and to drown us; what would you have said to one of the deputies, who, when you were proposing the proper repairs to stop the inundation, should have objected to the charge, as too heavy on the province? This was the case in a political sense with both England and Holland. The fences  
raised

raised to keep out superstition and tyranny were all giving way: those dreadful evils were threatening, with their whole accumulated force, to break in upon us, and overwhelm our ecclesiastical and civil constitution. In such circumstances, to object to a necessary expence, is folly and madness.

DE WITT.

It is certain, Sir, that the utmost abilities of a nation can never be so well employed, as in the unwearied, pertinacious defence of their religion and freedom. When *these* are lost, there remains nothing that is worth the concern of a good or wise man. Nor do I think it consistent with the prudence of government, not to guard against future dangers, as well as present; which precaution must be often in some degree expensive. I acknowledge too, that the resources of a commercial country, which supports its trade even in war by invincible fleets, and takes care not to hurt it in the methods of imposing or collecting its taxes, are immense, and inconceivable till the trial be made; especially where the government, which demands the supplies, is agreeable to the people. But yet an *unlimited* and *continued* expence will in the end be destructive. What matters it whether a state be mortally wounded by the hand of a foreign enemy, or die by a consumption of its own vital strength? Such a consumption will come upon Holland sooner than upon England, because the latter has a greater  
radical

radical force : but, great as it is, that force at last will be so diminished and exhausted by perpetual drains, that it may fail all at once; and those efforts which may seem most surprizingly vigorous will be in reality *the convulsions of death*. I don't apply this to your majesty's government; but I speak with a view to what may happen hereafter from the extensive ideas of negotiation and war which you have established. They have been salutary to your kingdom; but they will, I fear, be pernicious in future times, if, in pursuing great plans, great ministers do not act with a sobriety, prudence, and attention to frugality, which very seldom are joined with an extraordinary vigour and boldness of counsels.

## DIALOGUE XIX.

M. APICIUS—DARTENEUF.

DARTENEUF.

**A** LAS, poor Apicius!—I pity thee from my heart, for not having lived in my age and in my country. How many good dishes, unknown at Rome in thy days, have I feasted upon in England!

APICIUS.

Keep your pity for yourself.—How many good dishes have I feasted upon in Rome, which England does not produce; or of which the knowledge has been lost, with other treasures of antiquity, in these degenerate days! The fat paps of a sow, the livers of scari, the brains of phœnicopters, and the *tripotanium*, which consisted of three excellent sorts of fish, for which you English have no names, the *lupus marinus*, the *myxo*, and the *muræna*.

DARTENEUF.

I thought the *muræna* had been our lam-prey. We have delicate ones in the Severn!

APICIUS.

No:—the *muræna*, so respected by the ancient Roman senators, was a salt-water fish, and kept by our nobles in ponds into which the sea was admitted.

DARTENEUF.



DARTENEUF.

Why then I dare say our Severn lampreys are better. Did you ever eat any of them stewed or potted?

APICIUS.

I was never in Britain. Your country then was too barbarous for me to go thither. I should have been afraid that the Britons would eat me.

DARTENEUF.

I am sorry for you, very sorry: for, if you never were in Britain, you never eat the best oysters.

APICIUS.

See Juvenal  
and Pliny.  
Arbuthnot  
on Ancient  
Coins, c. 5;  
part ii.

Pardon me, Sir; your Sandwich oysters were brought to Rome in my time.

DARTENEUF.

They could not be fresh: they were good for nothing there.—You should have come to Sandwich to eat them. It is a shame for you that you did not.—An epicure talk of danger when he is in search of a dainty! Did not Leander swim over the Hellespont in a tempest, to get to his mistress? and what is a wench to a barrel of exquisite oysters?

APICIUS.

See Athe-  
næus, and  
Bayle in  
his Notes  
to the ar-  
ticle API-  
CIUS.

Nay—I am sure you can't blame me for any want of alertness in seeking fine fishes. I failed to the coast of Africk, from Min-  
turnæ in Campania, only to taste of one species, which I heard was larger there than it was on our coast; and finding that I had  
received

received a false information, I returned immediately, without even deigning to land.

DARTENEUF.

There was some sense in that: but why did you not also make a voyage to Sandwich; Had you once tasted those oysters in their highest perfection, you would never have come back: you would have eat till you burst.

APICIUS.

I wish I had:—It would have been better than poisoning myself, as I did at Rome, because I found, upon the balance of my accounts, I had only the pitiful sum of four-score thousand pounds left, which would not afford me a table to keep me from starving.

See Senec.  
de Consol.  
ad Hel-  
viam, Mar-  
tial. Epig.  
22. l. iii.  
Bayle,  
APICIUS.

DARTENEUF.

A sum of fourscore thousand pounds not keep you from starving! Would I had had it! I should have been twenty years in spending it, with the best table in London.

APICIUS.

Alas, poor man! this shews that you English have no idea of the luxury that reigned in our tables. Before I died, I had spent in my kitchen 807,291 l. 13 s. 4 d.

See Ar-  
buthnot,  
p. 116.

DARTENEUF.

I don't believe a word of it; there is certainly an error in the account.

APICIUS.

Why, the establishment of Lucullus for his suppers in *the Apollo*, I mean for every supper he sat down to in the room which he

VOL. II.

S

called

Arbuthnot, called by that name, was 5000 drachins;  
p. 133. which is in your money 1614 l. 11 s. 8 d.

DARTENEUF.

Would I had supped with him there! But are you sure there is no blunder in these calculations?

APICIUS.

Ask your learned men that;—I reckon as they tell me.—But you may think that these feasts were made only by great men, by triumphant generals, like Lucullus, who had plundered all Asia, to help him in his house-keeping. What will you say, when I tell you that the player *Æsopus* had one dish that cost him six thousand sestertia, that is, four thousand eight hundred and forty-three pounds, ten shillings, English?

Ibidem.  
Plin. l. x.  
c. 60.

DARTENEUF.

What will I say? why, that I pity my worthy friend Mr. Cibber; and that, if I had known this when alive, I should have hanged myself for vexation that I did not live in those days.

APICIUS.

Well you might, well you might.—You don't know what *eating* is. You never could know it. Nothing less than the wealth of the Roman empire is sufficient to enable a man of taste to keep a good table. Our players were infinitely richer than your princes.

DARTENEUF.

DARTENEUF.

Oh, that I had but lived in the blessed reign of Caligula, or of Vitellius; or of Heliogabalus; and had been admitted to the honour of dining with their slaves!

APICIUS.

Ay, there you touch me.—I am miserable that I died before their good times. They carried the glories of their table much further than the best eaters of the age in which I lived. Vitellius spent in feasting, within the compass of one year, what would amount in your money to above seven millions two hundred thousand pounds. He told me so himself, in a conversation I had with him not long ago. And the two others you mentioned did not fall very short of his royal magnificence.

See Bayle,  
APICIUS.  
Athenæus,  
l. i. p. 7.  
Arbuth-  
not, c. 5.

DARTENEUF.

These indeed were great princes. But what most affects me is the luxury of that upstart fellow Æsopus. Pray, of what ingredients might the dish, he paid so much for, consist?

APICIUS.

Chiefly of *singing-birds*. It was that which so greatly enhanced the price.

Arbuth-  
not,  
p. 123.

DARTENEUF.

Of *singing-birds*! choak him.—I never eat but *one*, which I stole out of its cage from a lady of my acquaintance; and all London was in an uproar, as if I had stolen



Pope's  
Imit. of  
Hor. Sat. I.  
ver. 6.

and roasted an only child. But, upon recollection, I doubt whether I have really so much cause to envy Æsopus. For the *singing-bird* which I eat was not so good as a wheatear or *becafique*. And therefore I suspect, that all the luxury you have bragged of was nothing but vanity. It was like the foolish extravagance of the son of Æsopus, who dissolved pearls in vinegar, and drank them at supper. I will stake my credit, that a haunch of good buck venison and my favourite *ham pye* were much better dishes than any at the table of Vitellius himself. It does not appear that you ancients ever had any good soups, without which a man of taste cannot possibly dine. The rabbits in Italy are detestable: but what is better than *the wing* of one of our English *wild* rabbits? I have been told you had no turkies. The mutton in Italy is ill-flavoured. And as to your boars *roasted whole*, they were only fit to be served up at a corporation feast, or election dinner. A small *barbecued hog* is worth a hundred of them. And a good collar of Canterbury or Shrewsbury brawn is a much better dish.

APICIUS.

See Arbuthnot,  
c. 5.

If you had some meats that we wanted, yet our cookery must have been greatly superior to yours. Our cooks were so excellent, that they could give to hogs flesh the taste of all other meats.

DARTÉ.

## DARTENEUF.

I would never have endured their imitations. You might as easily have imposed on a good *connoisseur* in painting the copy of a fine picture for the original. Our cooks, on the contrary, give to all other meats, and even to some kinds of fish, a rich flavour of bacon, without destroying that which makes the distinction of one from another. It does not appear to me that *essence of hams* was ever known to the ancients. We have a hundred *ragouts*, the composition of which surpasses all description. Had yours been as good, you could not have lain indolently lolling upon couches while you were eating. They would have made you sit up, and mind your business. Then you had a strange custom of having things *read to you* while you were at supper. This demonstrates that you were not so well entertained as we are with our meat. When I was at table, I neither heard, nor saw, nor spoke; I only tasted. But the worst of all is, that, in the utmost perfection of your luxury, you had no wine to be named with claret, burgundy, champagne, old hock, or tokay. You boasted much of your *Falernum*: but I have tasted the *Lacrymæ Christi* and other wines of that coast, not one of which would I have drunk above a glass or two of, if you would have given me the kingdom of Naples. I have read that you boiled your wines, and mixed

## DIALOGUES OF THE DEAD.

water with them, which is sufficient evidence that in themselves they were not fit to drink.

APICIUS.

I am afraid you do really excel us in wines; not to mention your beer, your cyder, and your perry, of all which I have heard great fame from your countrymen; and their report has been confirmed by the testimony of their neighbours, who have travelled into England. Wonderful things have been also said to me of an English liquor called punch.

DARTENEUF.

Ay—to have died without tasting *that*, is miserable indeed! There is rum punch, and arrack punch! It is difficult to say which is best. But Jupiter would have given his nectar for either of them, upon my word and honour.

APICIUS.

The thought of them puts me into a fever with thirst.

DARTENEUF.

These incomparable liquors are brought to us from the East and West Indies; of the first of which you knew little, and of the latter nothing. This alone is sufficient to determine the dispute. What a new world of good things for eating and drinking has Columbus opened to us! Think of *that*, and despair.

APICIUS.

APICIUS.

I cannot indeed but exceedingly lament my ill fate, that America was not discovered before I was born. It tortures me, when I hear of chocolate, pine-apples, and a number of other fine fruits, or delicious meats, produced there, which I have never tasted.

DARTENEUF.

The single advantage of having sugar, to sweeten every thing with, instead of honey, which you, for want of the other, were obliged to make use of, is inestimable.

APICIUS.

I confess your superiority in that important article. But what grieves me most is, that I never eat a turtle. They tell me that it is absolutely the best of all foods!

DARTENEUF.

Yes, I have heard the Americans say so:—but I never eat any; for, in my time, they were not brought over to England,

APICIUS.

Never eat any turtle? How couldst thou dare to accuse me of not going to Sandwich, to eat oysters; and didst not thyself take a trip to America to riot on turtles? But know, wretched man, I am credibly informed, that they are now as plentiful in England as sturgeons. There are turtle-boats that go regularly to London and Bristol from the



## DIALOGUES OF THE DEAD.

West Indies. I have just received this information from a fat alderman, who died in London last week, of a surfeit he got at a turtle-feast in that city.

DARTENEUF.

What does he say? does he affirm to you that turtle is better than venison?

APICIUS.

He says, there was a haunch of the fattest venison untouched, while every mouth was employed on the turtle alone.

DARTENEUF.

Alas! how imperfect is human felicity! I lived in an age when *the noble science of eating* was supposed to have been carried to its highest perfection in England and France. And yet a *turtle-feast* is a novelty to me! Would it be impossible, do you think, to obtain leave from Pluto of going back for one day to my own table at London, just to taste of that food? I would promise to kill myself by the quantity of it I would eat before the next morning.

APICIUS.

You have forgot you have no *body*: that which you had has long been rotten; and you can never return to the earth with another, unless Pythagoras should send you thither to animate a hog. But comfort yourself, that, as you have eaten dainties which

which I never tasted, so the next age will eat some unknown to this. New discoveries will be made, and new delicacies brought from other parts of the world.—But see; who comes hither? I think it is Mercury.

MERCURY.

Gentlemen, I must tell you, that I have stood near you invisible, and heard your discourse; a privilege, which, you know, we deities use as often as we please. Attend therefore to what I shall communicate to you, relating to the subject upon which you have been talking. I know two men, one of whom lived in antient, and the other in modern times, who had much more pleasure in eating than either of you through the whole course of your lives.

APICIUS.

One of these happy epicures, I presume, was a Sybarite, and the other a French gentleman settled in the West Indies.

MERCURY.

No: one was a Spartan soldier, and the other an English farmer.—I see you both look astonished. But what I tell you is truth. Labour and hunger gave a relish to the *black broth* of the former, and the *salt beef* of the latter, beyond what you ever found in the *tripotaniums* or *ham pyes*, that vainly stimulated your forced and languid appetites,  
which

## DIALOGUES OF THE DEAD.

which perpetual indolence weakened, and constant luxury overcharged.

DARTENEUF,

This, Apicius, is more mortifying than not to have shared a turtle-feast!

APICIUS,

I wish, Mercury, you had taught me your *art of cookery* in my life-time: but it is a sad thing not to know what *good living* is till after one is *dead*.

DIA-

## DIALOGUE XX.

ALEXANDER THE GREAT—

CHARLES the Twelfth, King of Sweden.

ALEXANDER.

YOUR majesty seems in great wrath!  
Who has offended you?

CHARLES.

The offence is to you as much as me. Here  
is a fellow admitted into Elysium, who has  
affronted us both; an English poet, one Pope.  
He has called us *two madmen*!

Essay on  
Man, Ep.  
iv. l. 219,  
220.

ALEXANDER.

I have been unlucky in poets. No prince  
ever was fonder of the Muses than I, or has  
received from them a more ungrateful return!  
When I was alive, I declared that I envied  
Achilles, because he had a Homer to celebrate  
his exploits; and I most bountifully rewarded  
Choerilus, a pretender to poetry, for writing  
verses on mine; but my liberality, instead  
of doing me honour, has since drawn upon me  
the ridicule of Horace, a witty Roman poet;  
and Lucan, another versifier of the same na-  
tion, has loaded my memory with the harshest  
invectives.

CHARLES.

I know nothing of these; but I know that  
in my time, a pert French satirist, one Boileau,  
made so free with your character, that I tore  
his

See Porria-  
towski's r.  
marks on  
Voltaire's  
History of  
his Char. XII.



his book for having abused my favourite hero, And now this saucy Englishman has libelled us both.—But I have a proposal to make to you, for the reparation of our honour. If you will join with me, we will turn all these insolent scribblers out of Elysium, and throw them down headlong to the bottom of Tartarus, in spite of Pluto and all his guards.

ALEXANDER.

This is just such a scheme as that you formed at Bender, to maintain yourself there, with the aid of three hundred Swedes, against the whole force of the Ottoman empire. And I must say, that such follies gave the English poet too much cause to call you a madman.

CHARLES.

If my heroism were madness, yours, I presume, was not wisdom!

ALEXANDER.

There was a vast difference between your conduct and mine. Let poets or declaimers say what they will, history shews, that I was not only the bravest soldier, but one of the ablest commanders the world has ever seen: whereas you, by imprudently leading your army into vast and barren deserts at the approach of the winter, exposed it to perish in its march for want of subsistence, lost your artillery, lost a great number of your soldiers, and were forced to fight with the Muscovites under such disadvantages as made it almost impossible for you to conquer.

CHARLES.

CHARLES.

I will not dispute your superiority as a general. It is not for me, a mere mortal, to contend with the *son of Jupiter Ammon*!

ALEXANDER.

I suppose you think my pretending that *Jupiter* was my father as much entitles me to the name of a madman, as your extravagant behaviour at Bender does you. But you greatly mistake. It was not my vanity, but my policy, which set up that pretension. When I proposed to undertake the conquest of Asia, it was necessary for me to appear to the people something more than a man. They had been used to the idea of *demigod heroes*. I therefore claimed an equal descent with Osiris and Sesostris, with Bacchus and Hercules, the former conquerors of the East. The opinion of my divinity assisted my arms, and subdued all nations before me, from the Granicus to the Ganges. But, though I called myself *the son of Jupiter*, and kept up the veneration that name inspired, by a courage which seemed more than human, and by the sublime magnanimity of all my behaviour, I did not forget that I was *the son of Philip*. I used the policy of my father, and the wise lessons of Aristotle, whom he had made my preceptor, in the conduct of all my great designs. It was *the son of Philip* who planted Greek colonies in Asia, as far as the Indies; who formed projects of trade more extensive than his empire itself; who  
6 laid

See Plu-  
tarch's Life  
of Alexan-  
der.

laid the foundations of them in the midst of his wars; who built Alexandria, to be the centre and staple of commerce between Europe, Asia, and Africk; who sent Nearchus to navigate the unknown Indian seas, and intended to have gone himself from those seas to the pillars of Hercules, that is, to have explored the passage round Africk, the discovery of which has since been so glorious to Vasco de Gama. It was *the son of Philip*, who, after subduing the Persians, governed them with such lenity, such justice, and such wisdom, that they loved him even more than ever they had loved their natural kings; and who, by intermarriages, and all methods that could best establish a coalition between the conquerors and conquered, united them into one people. But what, Sir, did you do, to advance the trade of your subjects, to procure any benefit to those whom you had vanquished, or to convert any enemy into a friend?

CHARLES.

When I might easily have made myself king of Poland; and was advised to do so, by count Piper, my favourite minister; I generously gave that kingdom to Stanislaus, as you had given a great part of your conquests in India to Porus, besides his own dominions, which you restored to him entire, after you had beaten his army and taken him captive.

ALEX.

## DIALOGUE XX.

271

ALEXANDER.

I gave him the government of those countries under me, and as my lieutenant ; which was the best method of preserving my power in conquests where I could not leave garrisons sufficient to maintain them. The same policy was afterwards practised by the Romans, who, of all conquerors, except me, were the greatest politicians. But neither was I, nor were they, so extravagant as to conquer only for others, or dethrone kings with no view but merely to have the pleasure in bestowing their crowns on some of their subjects, without any advantage to ourselves. Nevertheless, I will own, that my expedition to India was an exploit of *the son of Jupiter*, not of *the son of Philip*. I should have done better if I had staid to give more consistency to my Persian and Grecian empires, instead of attempting new conquests, and at such a distance, so soon. Yet even this war was of use, to hinder my troops from being corrupted by the effeminacy of Asia, and to keep up that universal awe of my name, which in those countries was the great support of my power.

CHARLES.

In the unwearied activity with which I proceeded from one enterprize to another, I dare call myself your equal. Nay, I may pretend to a higher glory than you, because you only went on from victory to victory ; but the greatest losses were not able to diminish



nish my ardour, or stop the efforts of my daring and invincible spirit.

ALEXANDER.

You shewed in adversity much more magnanimity than you did in prosperity. How unworthy of a prince who imitated me was your behaviour to the king your arms had vanquished! The compelling Augustus to write himself a letter of congratulation to one of his vassals, whom you had placed in his throne, was the very reverse of my treatment of Porus and Darius. It was an ungenerous insult upon his ill-fortune! It was the triumph of a little and a low mind! The visit you made him immediately after that insult was a farther contempt, offensive to him, and both useless and dangerous to yourself.

CHARLES.

I feared no danger from it.—I knew he durst not use the power I gave him to hurt me.

ALEXANDER.

If his resentment, in that instant, had prevailed over his fear, as it was likely to do, you would have perished deservedly by your insolence and presumption. For my part, intrepid as I was in all dangers which I thought it was necessary or proper for me to meet, I never put myself one moment in the power of an enemy whom I had offended. But you had the rashness of *folly* as well as of *heroism*. A false opinion conceived of your enemy's weakness proved at last your undoing. When, in answer to some reasonable propositions

tions of peace sent to you by the Czar, you said, "*You would come and treat with him at Moscow;*" he replied very justly, "*That you affected to act like Alexander, but should not find in him a Darius.*" And, doubtless, you ought to have been better acquainted with the character of that prince. Had Persia been governed by a *Peter Alexowitz* when I made war against it, I should have acted more cautiously, and not have counted so much on the superiority of my troops, in valour and discipline, over an army commanded by a king who was so capable of instructing them in all they wanted.

CHARLES.

The battle of Narva, won by eight thousand Swedes against fourscore thousand Muscovites, seemed to authorize my contempt of the nation and their prince.

ALEXANDER.

It happened that their prince was not present in that battle. But he had not then had the time which was necessary to instruct his barbarous soldiers. You gave him that time; and he made so good a use of it, that you found at Pultowa the Muscovites become a different nation. If you had followed the blow you gave them at Narva, and marched directly to Moscow, you might have destroyed their Hercules in his cradle. But you suffered him to grow, till his strength was mature; and then acted as if he had been still in his childhood.

VOL. II.

T

CHARLES.

See Voltaire's Charles XII.

## DIALOGUES OF THE DEAD.

CHARLES.

I must confess, you excelled me in conduct, in policy, and in true magnanimity. But my liberality was not inferior to yours; and neither you nor any mortal ever surpassed me in the enthusiasm of courage. I was also free from those vices which sullied your character. I never was drunk; I killed no friend in the riot of a feast; I fired no palace at the instigation of a harlot.

ALEXANDER.

See Plu-  
tarch's Mo-  
rals, and  
Xenophon.

See Vol-  
taire's  
Charles  
XII.

It may perhaps be admitted as some excuse for my drunkenness, that the Persians esteemed it an excellence in their kings to be able to drink a great quantity of wine, and the Macedonians were far from thinking it a dishonour. But you were as frantick and as cruel when sober, as I was when drunk. You were sober, when you resolved to continue in Turkey against the will of your host, the *grand signior*. You were sober, when you commanded the unfortunate Patkull, whose only crime was his having maintained the liberties of his country, and who bore the sacred character of an ambassador, to be broken alive on the wheel, against the laws of nations, and those of humanity, more inviolable still to a generous mind. You were likewise sober, when you wrote to the senate of Sweden, who, upon a report of your death, endeavoured to take some care of your kingdom, *That you would send them one of your boots, and from that they should receive their orders,*

*orders, if they pretendrd to meddle in government: an insult much worse than any the Macedonians complained of from me, when I was most heated with wine and with adulation! As for my chastity, it was not so perfect as yours, though on some occasions I obtained great praise for my continence: but, perhaps, if you had been not quite so insensible to the charms of the fair sex, it would have mitigated and softened the fierceness, the pride, and the obstinacy, of your nature.*

CHARLES.

It would have softened me into a woman, or, what I think still more contemptible, the slave of a woman. But you seem to insinuate, that you never were cruel or frantick unless when you were drunk. This I absolutely deny.—You were not drunk, when you crucified Hephæstion's physician, for not curing a man who killed himself by his intemperance in his sickness; nor when you sacrificed to the manes of that favourite officer the whole nation of the Cusleans, men, women, and children, who were entirely innocent of his death; because you had read in Homer, that Achilles had immolated some Trojan captives on the tomb of Patroclus. I could mention other proofs that your passions inflamed you as much as wine: but these are sufficient.

See Plutarch's Life of Alexander.

ALEXANDER.

I cannot deny that my passions were sometimes so violent as to deprive me for a while

T 2

of



## DIALOGUES OF THE DEAD.

of the use of my reason; especially when the pride of such amazing successes, the servitude of the Persians, and barbarian flattery, had intoxicated my mind. To bear, at my age, with continual moderation, such fortune as mine, was hardly in human nature. As for you, there was an excess and intemperance in your virtues, which turned them all into vices. And one virtue you wanted, which in a prince is very commendable, and beneficial to the publick; I mean, the love of science and of the elegant arts. Under my care and patronage, they were carried in Greece to their utmost perfection. Aristotle, Apelles, and Lyfippus, were among the glories of my reign: yours was illustrated only by battles.—Upon the whole, though, from some resemblance between us, I should naturally be inclined to decide in your favour, yet I must give the priority in renown to your enemy, Peter Alexowitz. That great monarch *raised* his country; you *ruined* yours. He was a *legislator*; you were a *tyrant*.

## DIALOGUE XXI.

Cardinal XIMENES—Cardinal WOLSEY.

WOLSEY.

YOU seem to look on me, Ximenes, with an air of superiority, as if I were not your equal. Have you forgotten that I was the favourite and first minister of a great king of England? that I was at once lord high chancellor, bishop of Durham, bishop of Winchester, archbishop of York, and cardinal legate? On what other subject were ever accumulated so many dignities, such honours, such power?

XIMENES.

In order to prove yourself my equal, you are pleased to tell me what you *had*, not what you *did*. But it is not the having great offices; it is the doing great things, that makes a great minister. I know that for some years you governed the mind of king Henry the Eighth, and consequently his kingdom, with the most absolute sway. Let me ask you then, what were *the acts of your reign*?

WOLSEY.

My *acts* were those of a very skilful courtier and able politician. I managed a temper, which nature had made the most difficult to manage, of any, perhaps, that ever existed, with such consummate address, that all its

passions were rendered entirely subservient to my inclinations. In foreign affairs, I turned the arms of my master, or disposed of his friendship, whichever way my own interest happened to direct. It was not with *him*, but with *me*, that treaties were made by the Emperor or by France; and none were concluded, during my ministry, that did not contain some article in my favour, beside secret assurances of aiding my ambition or resentment, which were the real springs of all my negotiations. At home, I brought the pride of the English nobility, which had resisted the greatest of the *Plantagenets*, to bow submissively to the son of a *butcher of Ipswich*. And, as my power was royal, my state and magnificence were suitable to it: my buildings, my furniture, my household, my equipage, my liberality, and my charities, were above the rank of a subject.

## XIMENES.

From all you have said, I understand that you gained great advantages *for yourself* in the course of your ministry, too great indeed for a good man to desire, or a wise man to accept. But what did you do for your sovereign, and for the state?—You make me no answer.—

See Marfo-  
lier, Vie de  
Ximesne.

What I did is well known. I was not content with forcing the arrogance of the Spanish nobility to stoop to my power, but used that power to free the people from their oppressions. In you, they respected the royal authority; I made them respect the majesty of the

the laws. I also relieved my countrymen, the commons of Castile, from a most grievous burthen, by an alteration in the method of collecting their taxes. After the death of Isabella, I preserved the tranquillity of Aragon and Castile, by procuring the regency of the latter for Ferdinand, a wise and valiant prince, though he had not been my friend during the life of the queen. And when, after his decease, I was raised to the regency by the general esteem and affection of the Castilians, I administered the government with great courage, firmness, and prudence; with the most perfect disinterestedness in regard to myself, and most zealous concern for the publick. I suppressed all the factions which threatened to disturb the peace of that kingdom in the minority and the absence of the young king; and prevented the discontents of the commons of Castile, too justly incensed against the Flemish ministers, who governed their prince and rapaciously pillaged their country, from breaking out, during my life, into open rebellion, as they did, most unhappily, soon after my death. These were my civil acts: but, to complete the renown of my administration, I added to it the palm of military glory. At my own charges, and myself commanding the army, I conquered Oran from the Moors, and annexed it, with its territory, to the Spanish dominions.



## DIALOGUES OF THE DEAD.

WOLSEY.

My soul was as elevated and noble as yours ; my understanding as strong, and more refined. But the difference of our conduct arose from the difference of our objects. To raise your reputation, and secure your power in Castile, by making that kingdom as happy and as great as you could, was your object. Mine was, to procure *the triple crown* for myself, by the assistance of my sovereign, and of the greatest foreign powers. Each of us took the means that were evidently most proper to the accomplishment of his ends.

XIMENES.

Can you confess such a principle of your conduct without a blush? But you will at least be ashamed, that you failed in your purpose, and were the dupe of the powers with whom you negotiated—after having dishonoured the character of your master, in order to serve your own ambition. I accomplished my desire, with glory to my sovereign, and advantage to my country. Beside this difference, there was a great one in the methods by which we acquired our power. We both owed it indeed to the favour of princes ; but I gained Isabella's by the opinion she had of my piety and integrity : you gained Henry's by a complaisance and course of life, which were a reproach to your character and sacred orders.

WOLSEY,

WOLSEY.

I did not, as you, Ximenes, did, carry with me to court the austerity of a monk; nor, if I had done so, could I possibly have gained any influence there. Isabella and Henry were different characters, and their favour was to be sought in different ways. By making myself agreeable to the latter, I so governed his passions, unruly as they were, that, while I lived, they did not produce any of those dreadful effects, which after my death were caused by them in his family and kingdom.

XIMENES.

If Henry the Eighth, your master, had been king of Castile, I would never have been drawn by him out of my cloister. A man of virtue and spirit will not be prevailed with to go into a court where he cannot rise without baseness.

WOLSEY.

The inflexibility of your mind had like to have ruined you in some of your measures: and the bigotry, which you had derived from your long abode in a cloister, and retained when a minister, was very near depriving the crown of Castile of the new-conquered kingdom of Granada, by the revolt of the Moors in that city, whom you had prematurely forced to change their religion. Do you not remember how angry king Ferdinand was with you on that account?

See Marfo-  
lier, Vie de  
Ximefne.

XIMENES.

## DIALOGUES OF THE DEAD.

XIMENES.

I do, and must acknowledge that my zeal was too intemperate in all that proceeding.

WOLSEY.

My worst complaisances to king Henry the Eighth were far less hurtful to England, than the unjust and inhuman court of inquisition which you established in Granada, to watch over the faith of your unwilling converts, has been to Spain.

XIMENES.

I only revived and settled in Granada an ancient tribunal, instituted first by one of our saints against the Albigenses, and gave it greater powers. The mischiefs which have attended it cannot be denied. But if any force may be used for the maintenance of religion (and the church of Rome has, you know, declared authoritatively that it may), none could be so effectual to answer the purpose,

WOLSEY.

This is an argument rather against the opinion of the church, than for the inquisition. I will only say, I think myself very happy, that my administration was stained with no action of cruelty, not even cruelty *sanctified by the name of religion*. My temper indeed, which influenced my conduct more than my principles, was much milder than yours. To the proud, I was proud; but to my friends and inferiors, benevolent and humane. Had I succeeded in the great object  
of

of my ambition, had I acquired the popedom, I should have governed the church with more moderation and better sense than, probably, you would have done, if you had exchanged the see of Toledo for that of Rome. My good-nature, my policy, my taste for magnificence, my love of the fine arts, of wit, and of learning, would have made me the delight of all the Italians, and have given me a rank among the greatest princes. Whereas in you, the sour bigot and rigid monk would too much have prevailed over the prince and the statesman.

## XIMENES.

What either of us would have been in that situation does not appear. But, if you are compared to me *as a minister*, you are vastly inferior. The only circumstance in which you can justly pretend to any equality is the encouragement you gave to learning, and your munificence in promoting it, which was indeed very great. Your two colleges founded at Ipswich and Oxford may vie with my university at Alcala de Henara. But in our generosity there was this difference: all my revenues were spent in well-placed liberalities, in acts of charity, piety, and virtue; whereas a great part of your enormous wealth was squandered away in luxury and vain ostentation. With regard to all other points, my superiority is apparent. You were only a favourite: I was the friend and the father of the people. You served yourself: I served the state. The conclusion of our lives was  
also



## DIALOGUES OF THE DEAD.

also much more honourable to me than you.

WOLSEY.

Did not you die, as I did, in disgrace with your master?

XIMENES.

That disgrace was brought upon me by a faction of foreigners, to whose power, as a good Spaniard, I would not submit. A minister, who falls a victim to such an opposition, rises by his fall. Yours was not graced by any publick cause, any merit to the nation: your spirit therefore sunk under it; you bore it with meanness. Mine was unbroken, superior to my enemies, superior to fortune; and I died, as I had lived, with undiminished dignity and greatness of mind.

DIA.

## DIALOGUE XXII.

LUCIAN—RABELAIS.

LUCIAN.

FRIEND Rabelais, well met.—Our souls are very good company for one another. We both were great wits, and most audacious freethinkers. We laughed often at Folly, and sometimes at Wisdom. I was indeed more correct and more elegant in my style: but then, in return, you had a greater fertility of imagination. My *True History* is much inferior, in fancy and invention, in force of wit and keenness of satire, to your *History of the Acts of Garagantua and Pantagruel*.

RABELAIS.

You do me great honour: but I may say, without vanity, that both those compositions entitle the authors of them to a very distinguished place, among memoir-writers, travellers, and even historians ancient and modern.

LUCIAN.

Doubtless they do. But will you pardon me if I ask you one question? Why did you chuse to write such absolute *nonsense*, as  
you

you have in some places of your illustrious work?

RABELAIS.

I was forced to compound my physick for the mind with a large dose of nonsense, in order to make it go down. To own the truth to you, if I had not so frequently put on *the fool's cap*, the freedoms I took, in other places, with *cowls*, with *red hats*, and *the triple crown itself*, would have brought me into great danger. Not only my book, but I myself, should, in all probability, have been condemned to the flames: and martyrdom was an honour to which I never aspired. I therefore counterfeited folly, like Junius Brutus, from the wisest of all principles, that of self-preservation. You, Lucian, had no need to use so much caution. Your heathen priests desired only a sacrifice now and then from an Epicurean, as a mark of *conformity*; and kindly allowed him to make as free as he pleased, in conversation or writings, with the whole tribe of gods and goddesses, from the thundering Jupiter and the scolding Juno, down to *the dog Anubis* and the fragrant dame *Cloacina*.

LUCIAN.

Say rather that our government allowed us that liberty! for, I assure you, our priests were by no means pleased with it; at least they were not in my time.

I

RABELAIS.

RABELAIS.

The wiser men they! for, in spite of the conformity required by the laws, and enforced by the magistrate, that ridicule brought the system of pagan theology into contempt, not only with the philosophical part of mankind, but even with the vulgar.

LUCIAN.

It did so; and the ablest defenders of paganism were forced to give up the poetical fables, and *allegorize the whole*.

RABELAIS.

An excellent way of drawing sense out of absurdity, and grave instructions from lewdness! There is a great modern wit, Sir Francis Bacon, lord Verulam, who, in his treatise, intituled *The Wisdom of the Ancients*, has done more for you that way than all your own priests!

LUCIAN.

He has indeed shewn himself an admirable chemist, and made a fine transmutation of folly into wisdom. But all the latter Platonists took the same method of defending our faith, when it was attacked by the Christians: and certainly a more judicious one could not be found. Our fables say, that, in one of their wars with the Titans, the Gods were defeated, and forced to turn themselves into *beasts*, in order to escape from the conquerors. Just the reverse happened here:—for, by this happy art, our  
*beastly*



## DIALOGUES OF THE DEAD.

*beastly divinities* were turned again into rational beings.

RABELAIS.

Give me a good commentator, with a subtle, refining, philosophical head; and you shall have the edification of seeing him draw *the most sublime allegories*, and the most venerable *mystic truths*, from my history of *the noble Garagantua and Pantagruel*! I don't despair of being proved, to the entire satisfaction of some future age, to have been, without exception, the profoundest *divine* and *metaphysician* that ever yet held a pen.

LUCIAN.

I shall rejoice to see you advanced to that honour. But in the mean time I may take the liberty to consider you as one of our class. There you sit very high.

RABELAIS.

I am afraid there is another, and a modern author too, whom you would bid to sit above me, and but just below yourself: I mean Dr. Swift.

LUCIAN.

It was not necessary for him to throw so much nonsense into his history of Lemuel Gulliver, as you did into that of your two illustrious heroes: and his style is far more correct than yours. His wit never descended (as yours frequently did) into the lowest of taverns, nor ever wore the meanest garb of the vulgar.

RABELAIS.

RABELAIS.

If the garb, which it wore, was not as *mean*, I am certain it was sometimes as *dirty* as mine.

LUCIAN.

It was not always nicely clean. Yet, in comparison with you, he was decent and elegant. But whether there were not in your compositions more *fire*, and a more *comic spirit*, I will not determine.

RABELAIS.

If you will not determine it, e'en let it remain a matter in dispute, as I have left the great question, *Whether Panurge should marry or not?* I would as soon undertake to measure the difference between the height and bulk of the giant Garagantua and his Brobdignanian majesty, as the difference of merit between my writings and Swift's. If any man take a fancy to like my book, let him freely enjoy the entertainment it gives him, and drink to my memory in a bumper. If another like Gulliver, let him toast Dr. Swift. Were I upon earth, I would pledge him in a bumper, *supposing the wine to be good*. If a third like neither of us, let him silently pass the bottle, and be quiet.

VOL. II.

U

LUCIAN.

## DIALOGUES OF THE DEAD.

LUCIAN.

But what if he will not be quiet? A critick is an unquiet creature.

RABELAIS.

Why then he will disturb himself, not me.

LUCIAN.

You are a greater philosopher than I thought you! I knew you paid no respect to popes or kings; but to pay none to criticks, is, in an author, a magnanimity beyond all example.

RABELAIS.

My life was a farce: my death was a farce: and would you have me make my book a serious affair? As for you, though in general you are only a joker, yet sometimes you must be ranked among grave authors. You have written sage and learned dissertations on history, and other weighty matters. The criticks have therefore an undoubted right to maul you, if they find you in their province. But, if any of them dare to come into mine, I will order Garagantua to swallow them up, as he did the six pilgrims, in the next fallad he eats.

See Rabelais, l. i. c. 38.

LUCIAN.

LUCIAN.

Have I not heard that you wrote a very good serious book on the Aphorisms of Hippocrates?

RABELAIS.

Upon my faith, I had forgot it. I am so used to my *fool's coat*, that I don't know myself in my solemn *doctor's gown*. But your information was right: that book was indeed a very respectable work. Yet nobody reads it; and if I had written nothing else, I should have been reckoned, at best, a *lacquey to Hippocrates*: whereas the historian of *Panurge* is an *eminent writer*. Plain good sense, like a dish of solid beef or mutton, is proper only for peasants; but a *ragout of folly*, well dressed with a *sharp sauce of wit*, is fit to be served up at an emperor's table.

LUCIAN.

You are an admirable pleasant fellow! let me embrace you.—How Apollo and the Muses may rank you on Parnassus, I am not very certain: but, if I were master of the ceremonies on Mount Olympus, you should be placed, with a full bowl of nectar before you, at the right hand of Momus.

RABELAIS.

I wish you were—but I fear the inhabitants of those sublime regions will like your com-



## DIALOGUES OF THE DEAD.

pany no better than mine. Indeed, how Momus himself could get a seat at that table, I cannot well comprehend! It has been usual, I confess, in some of our courts upon earth, to have a privileged jester, called *the king's fool*. But in the court of Heaven one should not have supposed such an officer as *Jupiter's fool*. Your allegorical theology in this point is very abstruse.

LUCIAN.

I think our priests admitted Momus into our heaven, as the Indians are said to worship the devil, through fear. They had a mind to keep fair with him. For we may talk of the *giants* as much as we please; but to *our gods* there is no enemy so formidable as he. *Ridicule* is the terror of all *false religion*. Nothing but *truth* can stand its lash.

RABELAIS.

Truth, advantageously set in a good and fair light, can stand any attacks: but those of ridicule are so teasing and so fallacious, that I have seen them put her ladyship very much out of humour.

LUCIAN.

Ay, friend Rabelais: and sometimes out of countenance too. But *truth* and *wit* in confederacy will strike Momus dumb. United they are invincible: and such a union is necessary

necessary upon certain occasions. *False reasoning* is most effectually exposed by *plain sense*; but *wit* is the best opponent to *false ridicule*; as *just ridicule* is to all the *absurdities* which dare to assume the venerable names of *Philosophy* or *Religion*. Had we made such a proper use of our agreeable talents, had we employed our ridicule to strip the foolish faces of superstition, fanaticism, and dogmatical pride, of the serious and solemn masks with which they are covered; at the same time exerting all the sharpness of our wit, to combat the flippancy and pertness of those who argue only by jests against reason and evidence, in points of the highest and most serious concern; we should have much better merited the esteem of mankind.

## D I A L O G U E XXIII.

PERICLES—COSMO DE MEDICIS, the first of that name.

PERICLES.

Plutarch's  
Life of  
Pericles,  
and Thu-  
cydides, l.  
ii. See also  
Machiavel's  
History of  
Florence,  
from the  
fourth  
book to  
the eighth.

**I**N what I have heard of your character and your fortune, illustrious Cosmo, I find a most remarkable resemblance with mine. We both lived in republicks where the sovereign power was in the people; and, by mere civil arts, but more especially by our eloquence, attained, without any force, to such a degree of authority, that we ruled those tumultuous and stormy democracies with an absolute sway, turned the tempests which agitated them upon the heads of our enemies, and, after having long and prosperously conducted the greatest affairs in war and peace, died revered and lamented by all our fellow-citizens.

COSMO.

We have indeed an equal right to value ourselves on *that noblest of empires*, the empire we gained over *the minds* of our countrymen.—*Force or caprice* may give power; but nothing can give a *lasting authority*, except *wisdom and virtue*. By these we obtained, by these

these we preserved, in our respective countries, a dominion unstained by usurpation or blood, a dominion conferred on us by the publick esteem and the publick affection. We were in reality sovereigns, while we lived with the simplicity of private men; and Athens and Florence believed themselves to be free, though they obeyed all our dictates. This is more than was done by Philip of Macedon, or Sylla, or Cæsar. It is the perfection of policy, to tame the fierce spirit of popular liberty, not by blows or by chains, but by soothing it into a voluntary obedience, and bringing it to lick the hand that restrains it.

## PERICLES.

The task can never be easy; but the difficulty was still greater to me than to you. For I had a lion to tame, from whose intractable fury the greatest men of my country, and of the whole world, with all their wisdom and virtue, could not save themselves. Themistocles and Aristides were examples of terror, that might well have deterred me from the administration of publick affairs at Athens. Another impediment in my way was the power of Cimon, who, for his goodness, his liberality, and the lustre of his victories over the Persians, was much beloved by the people; and, at the same time, by being thought to favour aristocracy,



had all the noble and rich citizens devoted to his party. It seemed impossible to shake so well-established a greatness. Yet, by the charms and force of my eloquence, which exceeded that of all orators contemporary with me, by the integrity of my life, my moderation, and my prudence, but, above all, by my artful management of the people, whose power I encreased, that I might render it the basis and support of my own, I gained such an ascendancy over all my opponents, that, having first procured the banishment of Cimon by ostracism, and then of Thucydides, another formidable antagonist set up by the nobles against my authority, I became the unrivaled chief, or rather the monarch, of the Athenian republick, without ever putting to death, in above forty years that my administration continued, one of my fellow-citizens: a circumstance which I declared, when I lay on my death-bed, to be, in my own judgement, more honourable to me, than all my prosperity in the government of the state, or the nine trophies erected for so many victories obtained by my conduct.

COSMO.

I had also the same happiness to boast of at my death: and some additions were made to the territories of Florence under my government: but I myself was no soldier, and the commonwealth I directed was never either

so warlike or so powerful as Athens. I must, therefore, not pretend to vie with you in the lustre of military glory: and I will moreover acknowledge, that to govern a people, whose spirit and pride were exalted by the wonderful victories of Marathon, Mycale, Salamis, and Platæa, was much more difficult than to rule the Florentines and the Tuscans. The liberty of the Athenians was, in your time, more imperious, more haughty, more insolent, than the despotism of the king of Persia. How great then must have been your ability and address, that could so absolutely reduce it under your power! Yet the temper of my countrymen was not easy to govern: for it was exceedingly factious. The history of Florence is little else, for several ages, than an account of conspiracies against the state. In my youth, I myself suffered much, by the dissensions which then embroiled the republick. I was imprisoned, and banished; but, after the course of some years, my enemies, in their turn, were driven into exile. I was brought back in triumph; and from that time till my death, which was above thirty years, I governed the Florentines, not by arms, or evil arts of tyrannical power, but with a legal authority; which I exercised so discreetly, as to gain the esteem of all the neighbouring potentates, and such a constant affection of all my fellow-citizens, that an inscription,

## DIALOGUES OF THE DEAD.

inscription, which gave me the title of *Father of my Country*, was engraved on my monument, by an unanimous decree of the whole commonwealth.

PERICLES.

Your end was incomparably more happy than mine. For you died, rather of age than any violent illness, and left the Florentines in a state of peace and prosperity procured for them by your counsels. But I died of the plague, after having seen it almost depopulate Athens; and left my country engaged in a most dangerous war, to which my advice and the power of my eloquence, had excited the people. The misfortune of the pestilence, with the inconveniences they suffered on account of the war, so irritated their minds, that, not long before my death, they condemned me to a fine,

COSMO.

It is wonderful, that, when once their anger was raised, it went no further against you! A favourite of the people, when disgraced, is in still greater danger than a favourite of the king.

PERICLES.

Your surprize will increase, at hearing that very soon afterward they chose me their general, and conferred on me again the principal direction of all their affairs.  
Had

Had I lived, I should have so conducted the war, as to have ended it with advantage and honour to my country; for, having secured to her the sovereignty of the sea, by the defeat of the Samians, before I let her engage with the power of Sparta, I knew that our enemies would be at length wearied out, and compelled to sue for a peace; because the city, from the strength of its fortifications, and the great army within it, being on the land side impregnable to the Spartans, and drawing continual supplies from the sea, suffered not much by the ravages of the country about it, whence I had before removed all the inhabitants: whereas their allies were undone by the descents we made on their coasts.

COSMO.

You seem to have understood beyond all other men what advantages are to be drawn from a *maritime power*, and how to make it the surest foundation of *empire*.

PERICLES.

I followed the plan traced out by Themistocles, the ablest politician that Greece had ever produced. Nor did I begin the Peloponnesian war (as some have supposed) only to make myself necessary, and stop an inquiry into my publick accounts: I really thought, that the republick of Athens could

See Thucydides,  
l. ii.

no



## DIALOGUES OF THE DEAD.

no longer defer a contest with Sparta, without giving up to that state the precedence in the direction of Greece, and her own independence. To keep off for some time even a necessary war, with a probable hope of making it more advantageously at a favourable opportunity, is an act of true wisdom; but not to make it, when you see that your enemy will be strengthened, and your own advantages lost, or considerably lessened, by the delay, is a most pernicious imprudence. With relation to my accounts, I had nothing to fear. I had not embezzled one *drachma* of publick money, nor added one to my own paternal estate; and the people had placed so entire a confidence in me, that they had allowed me, against the usual forms of their government, to dispose of large sums for *secret service*, without account. When therefore I advised the Peloponnesian war, I neither acted from private views, nor with the inconsiderate temerity of a restless ambition; but as became a wise statesman, who, having weighed all the dangers that may attend a great enterprize, and seeing a reasonable hope of good success, makes it his option to fight for dominion and glory, rather than sacrifice both to the uncertain possession of an insecure peace.

See Plutarch in the Life of Pericles; and Diodorus Siculus.

Thucydides, l. ii.

COSMO.

How were you sure of inducing so volatile a people to persevere in so steady a system of conduct as that which you had laid down; a system attended with much inconvenience and loss to particulars, while it presented but little to strike or inflame the imagination of the publick? Bold and arduous enterprizes, great battles, much bloodshed, and a speedy decision, are what the multitude desire in every war: but your plan of operation was the reverse of all this; and the execution of it required the temper of the Thebans, rather than of the Athenians.

PERICLES.

I found indeed many symptoms of their impatience; but I was able to restrain it, by the authority I had gained. For, during my whole ministry, I never had stooped to court their favour by any unworthy means; never flattered them in their follies, nor complied with their passions against their true interests and my own better judgement; but used the power of my eloquence to keep them in the bounds of a wise moderation, to raise their spirits when too low, and shew them their danger when they grew too presumptuous; the good effects of which conduct they had happily experienced in all  
I their

## DIALOGUES OF THE DEAD.

their affairs. Whereas those who succeeded to me in the government, by their incapacity, their corruption, and their servile complaisance to the humour of the people, presently lost all the fruits of my virtue and prudence. Xerxes himself, I am convinced, did not suffer more by the flattery of his courtiers, than the Athenians, after my decease, by that of their orators and ministers of state.

## C O S M O.

Machiavel  
History of  
Florence,  
l. vii.

Those orators could not gain the favour of the people by any other methods. Your arts were more noble; they were the arts of a statesman and of a prince. Your magnificent buildings, which in beauty of architecture surpassed any the world had ever seen, the statues of Phidias, the paintings of Xeuxis, the protection you gave to knowledge, genius, and abilities of every kind, added as much to the glory of Athens, as to your popularity. And in this I may boast of an equal merit to Florence. For I embellished that city, and the whole country about it, with excellent buildings; I protected all arts; and, though I was not myself so eloquent or so learned as you, I no less encouraged those who were eminent, in my time, for their eloquence or their learning. *Marcilius Ficinus, the second father of the Platonick philosophy, lived in*  
my

my house, and conversed with me as intimately as Anaxagoras with you. Nor did I ever forget and suffer him so to want the necessaries of life, as you did Anaxagoras, who had like to have perished by that unfriendly neglect; but, to secure him at all times from any distress in his circumstances, and enable him to pursue his sublime speculations unmolested by low cares, I gave him an estate adjacent to one of my favourite villas. I also drew to Florence Argiropolo, the most learned Greek of those times; that, under my patronage, he might teach the Florentine youth the language and sciences of his country. But with regard to our buildings, there is this remarkable difference: yours were all raised at the expence of the publick, mine at my own.

See Plu-  
tarch's  
Life of  
Pericles.

## P E R I C L E S.

My estate would bear no profuseness, nor allow me to exert the generosity of my nature. Your wealth exceeded that of any particular, or indeed of any prince, who lived in your days. The vast commerce, which, after the example of your ancestors, you continued to carry on in all parts of the world, even while you presided at the helm of the state, enabled you to do those splendid acts, which rendered your name so illustrious. But I was constrained to make the publick



See Plu-  
tarch in the  
Life of Pe-  
ricles, and  
Thucydi-  
des, l. ii.

lick treasure the fund of my bounties ; and I thought I could not possibly dispose of it better, in time of peace, than in finding employment for that part of the people which must else have been idle, and useless to the community ; introducing into Greece all the elegant arts, and adorning my country with works that are an honour to human nature. For, while I attended the most to these civil and peaceful occupations, I did not neglect to provide, with timely care, against war ; nor suffer the nation to sink into luxury and effeminate softness. I kept our fleets in continual exercise, maintained a great number of seamen in constant pay, and disciplined well our land-forces. Nor did I ever cease to recommend to all the Athenians, both by precepts and example, frugality, temperance, magnanimity, fortitude, and whatever could most effectually contribute to strengthen their bodies and minds.

## C O S M O.

Yet I have heard you condemned, for rendering the people less sober and modest, by giving them a share of the conquered lands, and paying them wages for their necessary attendance in the publick assemblies and other civil functions ; but more especially for the vast and superfluous expence you entailed on the state, in the theatrical spectacles

spectacles with which you entertained them at the cost of the publick.

## PERICLES.

Perhaps I may have been too lavish in some of those bounties.—Yet, in a popular state, it is necessary that the people should be amused, and should so far partake of the opulence of the publick, as not to suffer any want, which would render their minds too low and sordid for their political duties. In my time, the revenues of Athens were sufficient to bear this charge: but afterward, when we had lost the greatest part of our empire, it became, I must confess, too heavy a burthen; and the continuance of it proved one cause of our ruin.

## COSMO.

It is a most dangerous thing to load the state with largesses of that nature, or indeed with any unnecessary but popular charges; because to reduce them is almost impossible, though the circumstances of the publick should necessarily demand a reduction. But did not you likewise, in order to advance your own greatness, throw into the hands of the people of Athens more power than the institutions of Solon had entrusted them with, and more than was consistent with the good of the state?

Vol. II.

X

PERICLES.

## PERICLES.

See Plutarch, in the Lives of Solon and of Pericles.

We are now in the regions where Truth presides; and I dare not offend her, by playing the orator in defence of my conduct. I must therefore acknowledge that, by weakening the power of the court of Areopagus, I tore up that anchor, which Solon had wisely fixed, to keep his republic firm against the storms and fluctuations of popular factions. This alteration, which fundamentally injured the whole state, I made, with a view to serve my own ambition, the only passion in my nature which I could not contain within the limits of virtue. For I knew that my eloquence would subject the people to me, and make them the willing instruments of all my desires; whereas the Areopagus had in it an authority and a dignity which I could not controul. Thus, by diminishing the counterpoise our constitution had settled to moderate the excess of popular power, I augmented my own. But, since my death, I have been often reproached by the shades of some of the most virtuous and wisest Athenians, who have fallen victims to the caprice or fury of the people, with having been the first cause of the injustice they suffered, and of all the mischiefs perpetually brought on my country, by rash undertakings, bad conduct, and fluctuating councils

councils. They say, I delivered up the state to the government of indiscreet or venal orators, and to the passions of a misguided, infatuated multitude, who thought their freedom consisted in encouraging calumnies against the best servants of the commonwealth, and conferring power upon those who had no other merit than falling in with and soothing a popular folly. It is useless for me to plead, that during my life none of these mischiefs were felt; that I employed my rhetorick to promote none but good and wise measures; that I was as free from any taint of avarice or corruption as Aristides himself. They reply, that I am answerable for all the great evils occasioned afterward by the want of that salutary restraint on the natural levity and extravagance of a democracy, which I had taken away. Socrates calls me the patron of Anytus: and Solon himself frowns upon me, whenever we meet.

See Thucydides;  
l. ii.

C O S M O.

Solon has reason to do so;—for tell me, Pericles, what opinion would you have of the architect you employed in your buildings, if he had made them to last no longer than during the term of your life?

P E R I C L E S.

The answer to your question will turn to your own condemnation. Your excessive liberalities to the indigent citizens, and the

See Machiavel's History of Florence;  
l. vii.

X 2

great



## DIALOGUES OF THE DEAD.

great sums you lent to all the noble families, did in reality *buy* the republick of Florence; and gave your family such a power as enabled them to convert it from a popular state into an absolute monarchy.

## COSMO.

See Machiavel's History:

The Florentines were so infested with discord and faction, and their commonwealth was so void of military virtue, that they could not have long been exempt from a more ignominious subjection to some *foreign power*, if those internal dissentions, with the confusion and anarchy they produced, had continued. But the Athenians had performed very glorious exploits, had obtained a great empire; and were become one of the noblest states in the world, before you altered the balance of their government. And after that alteration they declined very fast, till they lost all their greatness.

## PERICLES.

Their constitution had originally a foul blemish in it, I mean *the ban of ostracism*, which alone would have been sufficient to undo any state. For there is nothing of such important use to a nation, as that men who most excel in wisdom and virtue should be encouraged to undertake the business of government. But this detestable custom deterred such men from serving the publick, or, if they ventured to do so, turned even their own wisdom and virtue against them; so that in Athens it was safer to be infamous

infamous than renowned. We are told indeed, by the advocates for this strange institution, that it was not *a punishment*, but meant as *a guard to the equality and liberty of the state*: for which reason, they deem it *an honour* done to the persons against whom it was used: as if words could change the real nature of things, and make a banishment of ten years, inflicted on a good citizen by the suffrages of his countrymen, no evil to him, or no offence against justice and the natural right every freeman may claim, that he shall not be expelled from any society of which he is a member, without having first been proved guilty of some criminal action.

C O S M O.

The ostracism was indeed a most unpardonable fault in the Athenian constitution. It placed envy in the seat of justice, and gave to private malice and publick ingratitude a legal right to do wrong. Other nations are blamed for tolerating vice; but the Athenians alone would not tolerate virtue.

P E R I C L E S.

The friends to the ostracism say, that too eminent virtue destroys that equality, which is the safeguard of freedom.

C O S M O.

No state is well modeled, if it cannot preserve itself from the danger of tyranny without a grievous violation of natural justice:

## DIALOGUES OF THE DEAD.

nor would a friend to *true freedom*, which consists in being governed, not by men, but by laws, desire to live in a country, where a Cleon bore rule, and where an Aristides was not suffered to remain. But, instead of remedying this evil, you made it worse. You rendered the people more intractable, more adverse to virtue, less subject to the laws, and more to impressions from mischievous demagogues, than they had been before your time.

## PERICLES.

In truth, I did so;—and therefore my place in Elysium, notwithstanding the integrity of my whole publick conduct, and the great virtues I exerted, is much below the rank of those who have governed commonwealths, or limited monarchies, not merely with a concern for their present advantage, but also with a prudent regard to that *balance of power*, on which their permanent happiness must necessarily depend.

## DIALOGUE XXIV.

LOCKE—BAYLE.

BAYLE.

YES, we both were philosophers; but my philosophy was the deepest. You *dogmatized*: I *doubted*.

LOCKE.

Do you make *doubting* a proof of *depth* in philosophy? It may be a good *beginning* of it; but it is a bad *end*.

BAYLE.

No:—the more profound our searches are into the nature of things, the more uncertainty we shall find; and the most subtle minds see objections and difficulties in every system, which are overlooked or undiscoverable by ordinary understandings.

LOCKE.

It would be better then to be no philosopher, and to continue in the vulgar herd of mankind, *that one may have the convenience of thinking that one knows something*. I find that the eyes which nature has given me see many things very clearly, though some are out of their reach, or discerned but dimly. What opinion ought I to have of a physician, who should offer me an eye-water, the use of which would at first so sharpen my sight, as to carry



it farther than ordinary vision; but would in the end put them out? Your philosophy, Monsieur Bayle, is to the eyes of the mind what I have supposed the doctor's *nostrum* to be to those of the body. It actually brought your own excellent understanding, which was by nature quick-sighted, and rendered more so by art and a subtilty of logick peculiar to yourself—it brought, I say, your very acute understanding to see nothing clearly, and enveloped all the great truths of reason and religion in mists of doubt.

BAYLE.

I own, it did;—but your comparison is not just. I did not see well, before I used my philosophick eye-water: I only supposed I saw well; but I was in an error, with all the rest of mankind. The blindness was real, the perceptions were imaginary. I cured myself first of those false imaginations, and then I laudably endeavoured to cure other men.

LOCKE.

A great cure indeed! and don't you think that, in return for the service you did them, they ought to erect you a statue?

BAYLE.

Yes; it is good for human nature to know its own weakness. When we arrogantly presume on a strength we have not, we are always in great danger of hurting ourselves, or at least of deserving ridicule and contempt by vain and idle efforts.

LOCKE.

LOCKE.

I agree with you, that human nature should know its own weakness; but it should also feel its strength, and try to improve it. This was my employment as a philosopher. I endeavoured to discover the real powers of the mind, to see what it could do, and what it could not; to restrain it from efforts beyond its ability; but to teach it how to advance as far as the faculties given to it by nature, with the utmost exertion and most proper culture of them, would allow it to go. In the vast ocean of philosophy, I had the line and the plummet always in my hands. Many of its depths I found myself unable to fathom; but, by caution in sounding, and the careful observations I made in the course of my voyage, I found out some truths of so much use to mankind, that they acknowledge me to have been their benefactor.

BAYLE.

Their ignorance makes them think so. Some other philosopher will come hereafter, and shew those truths to be falsehoods. He will pretend to discover other truths of equal importance. A later sage will arise, perhaps among men now barbarous and unlearned, whose sagacious discoveries will discredit the opinions of his admired predecessor. In philosophy, as in nature, all changes its form, and one thing exists by the destruction of another.

LOCKE.

LOCKE.

Opinions taken up without a patient investigation, depending on terms not accurately defined, and principles begged without proof, like theories to explain the phænomena of nature built on suppositions instead of experiments, must perpetually change and destroy one another. But some opinions there are, even in matters not obvious to the common sense of mankind, which the mind has received on such rational grounds of assent, that they are as immoveable as the pillars of heaven, or (to speak philosophically) as the great laws of nature, by which, under God, the universe is sustained. Can you seriously think, that, because the hypothesis of your countryman Descartes, which was nothing but an ingenious, well-imagined romance, has been lately exploded, the system of Newton, which is built on experiments and geometry, the two most certain methods of discovering truth, will ever fail; or that, because the whims of fanatics and the divinity of the schoolmen cannot now be supported, the doctrines of that religion, which I, the declared enemy of all enthusiasm and false reasoning, firmly believed and maintained, will ever be shaken?

BAYLE:

If you had asked Descartes, while he was in the height of his vogue, whether his system would be ever confuted by any other philosophers, as that of Aristotle had been by his,

his, what answer do you suppose he would have returned?

LOCKE.

Come, come, Monsieur Bayle, you yourself know the difference between the foundations on which the credit of those systems and that of Newton is placed. Your scepticism is more affected than real. You found it a shorter way to a great reputation (the only wish of your heart) to object, than to defend; to pull down, than to set up. And your talents were admirable for that kind of work. Then your huddling together, in a Critical Dictionary, a pleasant tale, or obscene jest, and a grave argument against the Christian religion, a witty confutation of some absurd author, and an artful sophism to impeach some respectable truth, was particularly commodious to all our young smarts and smatterers in free-thinking. But what mischief have you not done to human society? You have endeavoured, and with some degree of success, to shake those foundations, on which the whole moral world, and the great fabrick of social happiness, entirely rest. How could you, as a philosopher, in the sober hours of reflection, answer for this to your conscience, even supposing you had doubts of the truth of a system, which gives to virtue its sweetest hopes, to impenitent vice its greatest fears, and to true penitence its best consolations; which restrains even the least approaches to guilt, and yet makes those allowances



allowances for the infirmities of our nature, which the Stoick pride denied to it, but which its real imperfection and the goodness of its infinitely benevolent Creator so evidently require?

BAYLE.

The mind is free; and it loves to exert its freedom. Any restraint upon it is a violence done to its nature, and a tyranny, against which it has a right to rebel.

LOCKE.

The mind, though free, has a governor within itself, which may and ought to limit the exercise of its freedom. That governor is Reason.

BAYLE.

Yes:—but Reason, like other governors, has a policy more dependent upon uncertain caprice than upon any fixed laws. And if that reason which rules my mind, or yours, have happened to set up a favourite notion, it not only submits implicitly to it, but desires that the same respect should be paid to it by all the rest of mankind. Now I hold that any man may lawfully oppose this desire in another; and that, if he be wise, he will do his utmost endeavours to check it in himself.

LOCKE.

Is there not also a weakness of a contrary nature to this you are now ridiculing? do we not often take a pleasure to shew our own power, and gratify our own pride, by  
degrading

degrading notions set up by other men, and generally respected?

BAYLE.

I believe we do; and by this means it often happens that, if one man build and consecrate *a temple to folly*, another pulls it down.

LOCKE.

Do you think it beneficial to human society, to have *all temples* pulled down?

BAYLE.

I cannot say that I do.

LOCKE.

Yet I find not in your writings any mark of distinction, to shew us which you mean to save.

BAYLE.

A true philosopher, like an impartial historian, must be of no sect.

LOCKE.

Is there no medium between the blind zeal of a sectary, and a total indifference to all religion?

BAYLE.

With regard to morality, I was not indifferent.

LOCKE.

How could you then be indifferent with regard to the sanctions religion gives to morality? how could you publish what tends so directly and apparently to weaken in mankind the belief of those sanctions? was not this

## DIALOGUES OF THE DEAD.

this sacrificing the great interests of virtue to the little motives of vanity?

BAYLE.

A man may act indiscreetly, but he cannot do wrong, by declaring that, which, on a full discussion of the question, he sincerely thinks to be true.

LOCKE.

An enthusiast, who advances doctrines prejudicial to society, or opposes any that are useful to it, has the strength of opinion and the heat of a disturbed imagination to plead, in alleviation of his fault. But your cool head, and sound judgement, can have no such excuse. I know very well there are passages in all your works, and those not few, where you talk like a rigid moralist. I have also heard that your character was irreproachably good. But when, in the most laboured parts of your writings, you sap the surest foundations of all moral duties; what avails it that in others, or in the conduct of your life, you appeared to respect them? How many, who have stronger passions than you had, and are desirous to get rid of the curb that restrains them, will lay hold of your scepticism, to set themselves loose from all obligations of virtue! What a misfortune is it to have made such a use of such talents! It would have been better for you, and for mankind, if you had been one of the dullest of Dutch theologians, or the most credulous monk in a Portuguese convent. The riches

of the mind, like those of fortune, may be employed so perversely, as to become a nuisance and pest, instead of an ornament and support, to society.

BAYLE.

You are very severe upon me.—But do you count it no merit, no service to mankind, to deliver them from the frauds and fetters of priestcraft, from the deliriums of fanaticism, and from the terrors and follies of superstition? Consider how much mischief these have done to the world! Even in the last age, what massacres, what civil wars, what convulsions of government, what confusion in society, did they produce! Nay, in that we both lived in, though much more enlightened than the former, did I not see them occasion a violent persecution in my own country? and can you blame me for striking at the root of these evils?

LOCKE.

The root of these evils, you well know, was *false religion*; but you struck at the *true*. Heaven and hell are not more different, than the system of faith I defended, and that which produced the horrors of which you speak. Why would you so fallaciously confound them together in some of your writings, that it requires much more judgement, and a more diligent attention, than ordinary readers have, to separate them again, and to make the proper distinctions? This indeed is the great art of the most celebrated free-thinkers. They  
recommend



## DIALOGUES OF THE DEAD.

recommend themselves to warm and ingenuous minds, by lively strokes of wit, and by arguments really strong, against superstition, enthusiasm, and priestcraft. But, at the same time, they insidiously throw the colours of these upon the fair face of true religion, and dress her out in their garb, with a malignant intention to render her odious or despicable to those who have not penetration enough to discern the impious fraud. Some of them may have thus deceived *themselves*, as well as others. Yet it is certain, no book, that ever was written by the most acute of these gentlemen, is so repugnant to priestcraft, to spiritual tyranny, to all absurd superstitions, to all that can tend to disturb or injure society, as *that Gospel* they so much affect to despise.

BAYLE.

Mankind is so made, that, when they have been *over-heated*, they cannot be brought to a proper temper again till they have been *over-cooled*. My scepticism might be necessary, to abate the *fever* and *phrenzy* of false religion.

LOCKE.

A wise prescription indeed, to bring on a *paralytical* state of the mind (for such a scepticism as yours is a *palsy*, which deprives the mind of all vigour, and deadens its natural and vital powers) in order to take off a *fever*, which *temperance*, and *the milk of the evangelical doctrines*, would probably cure!

BAYLE.

BAYLE.

I acknowledge that those medicines have a great power. But few doctors apply them untainted with the mixture of some harsher drugs, or some unsafe and ridiculous *nostrums* of their own.

LOCKE.

What you now say is too true.—God has given us a most excellent physick for the soul, in all its diseases; but bad and interested physicians, or ignorant and conceited quacks, administer it so ill to the rest of mankind, that much of the benefit of it is unhappily lost.

## DIALOGUE XXV.

ARCHIBALD earl of DOUGLAS, duke of Touraine.

JOHN duke of ARGYLE and GREENWICH, field marshal of his Britannick Majesty's forces.

ARGYLE.

Buchanan,  
Rerum  
Scotica-  
rum, l. x.  
p. 338.  
A.D. 1424

YES, noble Douglas, it grieves me that you and your son, together with the brave earl of Buchan, should have employed so much valour, and have thrown away your lives, in fighting the battles of that state, which, from its situation and interests, is the perpetual and most dangerous enemy to Great Britain. A British nobleman serving France appears to me as unfortunate, and as much out of his proper sphere, as a Grecian commander, engaged in the service of Persia, would have appeared to Aristides or Agesilaus.

DOUGLAS.

In serving France, I served Scotland. The French were the natural allies to the Scotch; and, by supporting their crown, I enabled my countrymen to maintain their independence against the English.

7

ARGYLE.

## A R G Y L E.

The French indeed, from the unhappy state of our country, were *ancient allies* to the Scotch; but that they ever were our *natural allies*, I deny. Their alliance was proper and necessary for us, because we were then in an *unnatural* state, disunited from England. While that disunion continued, our monarchy was compelled to lean upon France for assistance and support. The French power and policy kept us, I acknowledge, independent on the English, but dependent on them; and this dependence exposed us to many grievous calamities, by drawing on our country the formidable arms of the English, whenever it happened that the French and they had a quarrel. The succours they afforded us were distant and uncertain. Our enemy was at hand, superior to us in strength, though not in valour. Our borders were ravaged; our kings were slain, or led captive; we lost all the advantage of being the inhabitants of a great island; we had no commerce, no peace, no security, no degree of maritime power. Scotland was a back-door, through which the French, with our help, made their inroads into England: if they conquered, we obtained little benefit from it; but, if they were defeated, we were always the devoted victims, on whom the conquerors severely wreaked their resentment.



## DIALOGUES OF THE DEAD.

DOUGLAS.

The English suffered as much in those wars as we. How terribly were their borders laid waste and depopulated by our sharp incursions! how often have the swords of my ancestors been stained with the best blood of that nation! were not our victories at Bannocbourn and at Otterbourn as glorious as any that, with all the advantage of numbers, they have ever obtained over us?

ARGYLE.

They were: but yet they did us no lasting good. They left us still dependent on the protection of France; they left us a poor, a feeble, a distressed, though a most valiant nation. They irritated England, but could not subdue it, nor hinder our feeling such effects of its enmity, as gave us no reason to rejoice in our triumphs.—How much more happily, in the auspicious reign of that queen who formed the Union, was my sword employed in humbling the foes of Great Britain! with how superior a dignity did I appear in the combined British senate, maintaining the interests of the whole united people of England and Scotland, against all foreign powers, who attempted to disturb our general happiness, or to invade our common rights!

DOUGLAS.

Your eloquence and your valour had unquestionably a much nobler and more spacious field,

field, to exercise themselves in, than any of those who defended the interests of only a part of the island.

ARGYLE.

Whenever I read any account of the wars between the Scotch and the English, I think I am reading a melancholy history of civil dissensions. Whichever side is defeated, their loss appears to me a loss to the whole, and an advantage to some foreign enemy of Great Britain. But the strength of that island is made compleat by the Union; and what a great English poet has justly said in one instance, is now true in all :

“ The Hotspur and the Douglas both to-  
 “ gerher  
 “ Are confident against the world in arms.”

See Shake-  
 spear's  
 Henry IV.  
 Part 1.

Who can resist the English and Scotch valour combined? When separated and opposed, they balanced each other: united, they will hold the balance of Europe. If all the Scotch blood that has been shed for the French, in unnatural wars against England, had been poured out, to oppose the ambition of France, in conjunction with the English; if all the English blood that has been spilt as unfortunately in useless wars against Scotland, had been preserved; France would long ago have been rendered incapable of disturbing

## DIALOGUES OF THE DEAD.

our peace, and Great Britain would have been the most powerful of nations.

DOUGLAS,

There is truth in all you have said.—But yet, when I reflect on the insidious ambition of king Edward the First, on the ungenerous arts he so treacherously employed, to gain, or rather to steal, the sovereignty of our kingdom, and the detestable cruelty he shewed to Wallace, our brave champion and martyr; my soul is up in arms against the insolence of the English; and I adore the memory of those patriots, who died in asserting the independence of our crown, and the liberty of our nation.

ARGYLE.

Had I lived in those days, I should have joined with those patriots, and been the foremost to maintain so noble a cause. The Scotch were not made to be subject to the English. Their souls were too great for such a timid submission. But they may unite and incorporate with a nation they would not obey. Their scorn of a foreign yoke, their strong and generous love of independence and freedom, make their union with England more natural and more proper. Had the spirit of the Scotch been servile or base, it could never have coalesced with that of the English.

DOUGLAS.

DOUGLAS.

It is true that the minds of both nations are congenial, and filled with the same noble virtues, the same impatience of servitude, the same magnanimity, courage, and prudence, the same genius for policy, for navigation and commerce, for sciences and arts. Yet, notwithstanding this happy conformity, when I consider how long they were enemies to each other; what an hereditary hatred and jealousy had subsisted, for many ages, between them; what private passions, what prejudices, what contrary interests, must have necessarily obstructed every step of the treaty; and how hard it was to overcome the strong opposition of national pride; I stand astonished that it was possible to unite the two kingdoms upon any conditions; and much more that it could be done with such equal regard and amicable fairness to both.

ARGYLE.

It was indeed a most arduous and difficult undertaking! The success of it must, I think, be thankfully ascribed, not only to the great firmness and prudence of those who had the management of it, but to the gracious assistance of Providence, for the preservation of the Reformed religion amongst us, which, in that conjuncture, if the Union had not been made, would have been ruined in Scotland, and much endangered in England. The same



See Hook's  
Letters,  
and Lock-  
hart's Me-  
moirs.

good Providence has watched over and protected it since, in a most signal manner, against the attempts of an infatuated party in Scotland, and the arts of France, who by her emissaries laboured to destroy it as soon as formed; because she justly foresaw that the continuance of it would be destructive to all her vast designs against the liberty of Europe. I myself had the honour to have a principal share in subduing one rebellion designed to subvert it; and since my death, it has been, I hope, established for ever, not only by the defeat of another rebellion, which came upon us in the midst of a dangerous war with France, but by measures prudently taken in order to prevent such disturbances for the future. The ministers of the crown have proposed, and the British legislature has enacted, a wise system of laws; the object of which is, to reform and to civilize the Highlands of Scotland; to deliver the people there from the arbitrary power and oppression of their chieftains; to carry the royal justice and royal protection into the wildest parts of their mountains; to hinder their natural valour from being abused and perverted to the detriment of their country; and to introduce among them arts, agriculture, commerce, tranquillity, with all the improvements of social and polished life.

DOUGLAS,

DOUGLAS.

By what you now tell me, you give me the highest idea of the great prince your master; who, after having been provoked by such a wicked rebellion, instead of enslaving the people of the Highlands, or laying the hand of power more heavy upon them (which is the usual consequence of unsuccessful revolts), has conferred on them the inestimable blessings of liberty, justice, and good order. To act thus, is indeed *to perfect the Union*; and make all the inhabitants of Great Britain acknowledge with gratitude and with joy that they are subjects of the same well-regulated kingdom, and governed with the same impartial affection, by the sovereign and father of the whole commonwealth.

ARGYLE.

The laws I have mentioned, and the humane, benevolent policy of his majesty's government, have already produced very salutary effects in that part of the kingdom; and, if steadily pursued, will produce many more. But no words can recount to you the infinite benefits, which have attended the Union, in the northern counties of England and the southern of Scotland.

DOUGLAS.

The fruits of it must be, doubtless, most sensible there, where the perpetual enmity  
between

## DIALOGUES OF THE DEAD.

between the two nations had occasioned the greatest disorder and desolation.

ARGYLE.

Oh, Douglas—could you revive, and return into Scotland, what a delightful alteration would you see in that country! All those great tracts of land, which in your time lay untilld, on account of the inroads of the bordering English, or the feuds and discords that raged with perpetual violence within our own distracted kingdom, you would now behold cultivated, and smiling with plenty. Instead of the castles, which every baron was compelled to erect for the defence of his family, and where he lived in the barbarism of Gothick pride, among miserable vassals oppressed by the abuse of his feudal powers, your eyes would be charmed with elegant country-houses, adorned with fine plantations and beautiful gardens; while happy villages or gay towns are rising about them, and enlivening the prospect with every image of rural wealth! On our coasts, trading cities, full of new manufactures, and continually encreasing the extent of their commerce! In our ports and harbours, innumerable merchant ships richly loaded, and protected from all enemies by the matchless fleet of Great Britain! But of all improvements the greatest is in the minds of the Scotch. These have profited even more than their lands, by  
the

the culture, which the settled peace and tranquillity produced by the Union have happily given to them : and they have discovered such talents in all branches of literature, as might render the English jealous of being excelled by their genius, if there could remain a competition, when there remains no distinction, between the two nations.

DOUGLAS.

There may be emulation without jealousy ; and the efforts, which that emulation will excite, may render our island superior in the same of wit and good learning to Italy or to Greece ; a superiority, which I have learnt in the Elysian fields to prefer even to that which is acquired by arms.—But one doubt still remains with me concerning the Union. I have been informed that no more than sixteen of our peers, except those who have English peerages (which some of the noblest have not), now sit in the house of lords, as representatives of the rest. Does not this in a great measure diminish those peers who are not elected ? and have you not found the election of the sixteen too dependent on the favour of a court ?

ARGYLE.

It was impossible that the English could ever consent, in the treaty of Union, to admit a greater number to have places and votes in the upper house of parliament: but all the Scotch peerage is virtually there, by representation. And those who are not elected have

See the Act  
of Union,  
Part. 23.



## DIALOGUES OF THE DEAD.

have every dignity and right of the peerage, except the privilege of sitting in the house of lords, and some others depending thereon.

DOUGLAS.

They have so:—but, when parliaments enjoy such a share in the government of a country as ours do at this time, to be *personally* there is a privilege and a dignity of the highest importance.

ARGYLE.

See Robertson's  
History of  
Scotl. l. i.  
p. 69—72.

I wish it had been possible to impart it to all. But your reason will tell you it was not.—And consider, my lord, that, till the Revolution in sixteen hundred and eighty-eight, the power vested by our government in *the lords of the Articles* had made our parliaments much more subject to the influence of the crown than our elections are now. As, by the manner in which they were constituted, those lords were no less devoted to the king than his own privy council; and as no proposition could then be presented in parliament, if rejected by them; they gave him a negative before debate. This indeed was abolished upon the accession of king William the Third, with many other oppressive and despotical powers, which had rendered our nobles abject slaves to the crown, while they were allowed to be tyrants over the people. But if king James, or his son, had been restored, the government he had exercised would

would have been re-established: and nothing but the Union of the two kingdoms could have effectually prevented that restoration.

We likewise owe to the Union the subsequent abolition of the Scotch privy council, which had been the most grievous engine of tyranny; and that salutary law, which declared that no crimes should be high treason or misprision of treason in Scotland, but such as were so in England; and gave us the English methods of trial in cases of that nature: whereas, before, there were so many species of treasons, the construction of them was so uncertain, and the trials were so arbitrary, that no man could be safe from suffering as a traitor. By the same act of parliament, we also received a communication of that noble privilege of the English, exemption from torture; a privilege, which though essential both to humanity and to justice, no other nation in Europe, not even the freest republics, can boast of possessing. Shall we then take offence at some inevitable circumstances, which may be objected to, on our part, in the treaty of Union, when it has delivered us from slavery, and all the worst evils that a state can suffer? It might be easily shewn, that, in his political and civil condition, every baron in Scotland is much happier now, and much more independent, than the highest was under that constitution of government which continued in Scotland even after the

See Act for rendering the Union of the two kingdoms more entire and complete, anno reginæ Annæ sextæ.

See Act for improving the Union of the two kingdoms, anno septimo Annæ reginæ.

See Robertson's History of Scotland, l. viii. and Hume's History of Charles II. c. 7. and James II. c. 1.

## DIALOGUES OF THE DEAD.

expulsion of king James the Second. The greatest enemies to the Union are the friends of that king, in whose reign, and in his brother's, the kingdom of Scotland was subjected to a despotism as arbitrary as that of France, and more tyrannically administered.

DOUGLAS.

All I have heard of those reigns makes me blush with indignation at the servility of our nobles, who could endure them so long. What then was become of that undaunted Scotch spirit, which had dared to resist the Plantagenets in the height of their power and pride? could the descendants of those, who had disdained to be subjects of Edward the First, submit to be slaves of Charles the Second, or James?

ARGYLE.

They seemed in general to have lost every characteristick of their natural temper, except a desire to abuse the royal authority, for the gratification of their private resentments in family quarrels.

DOUGLAS.

Your grandfather, my lord, has the glory of not deserving this censure.

ARGYLE.

I am proud that his spirit, and the principles he professed, drew upon him the injustice  
and

and fury of those times. But there needs no other proof than the nature and the manner of his condemnation, to shew what a wretched state our nobility then were in; and what an inestimable advantage it is to them, that they are now to be tried as peers of Great Britain, and have the benefit of those laws which imparted to us the equity and the freedom of the English constitution.

See Hume's  
History of  
Charles II.  
c. 7.

See the Act  
of Union,  
art. 23.

Upon the whole, as much as wealth is preferable to poverty, liberty to oppression, and national strength to national weakness; so much has Scotland incontestably gained by the Union. England too has secured by it every publick blessing which was before enjoyed by her, and has greatly augmented her strength. The martial spirit of the Scotch, their hardy bodies, their acute and vigorous minds, their industry, their activity, are now employed to the benefit of the whole island. He is now a bad Scotchman who is not a good Englishman, and he is a bad Englishman who is not a good Scotchman. Mutual intercourse, mutual interests, mutual benefits, must naturally be productive of mutual affection. And when that is established, when our hearts are sincerely united, many great things, which some remains of jealousy and distrust, or narrow local partialities, may hitherto have obstructed, will be done for the good of the whole united kingdom. How much may the revenues of Great Britain be increased



## DIALOGUES OF THE DEAD.

creased by the further encrease of population, of industry, and of commerce, in Scotland! what a mighty addition to the stock of national wealth will arise from the improvement of our most northern counties, which are infinitely capable of being improved! The briars and thorns are in a great measure grubbed up: the flowers and fruits may soon be planted. And what more pleasing, or what more glorious employment, can any government have, than to attend to the cultivating of such a plantation?

DOUGLAS.

The prospect you open to me of happiness to my country appears so fair, that it makes me amends for the pain with which I reflect on the times wherein I lived, and indeed on our whole history for several ages.

ARGYLE.

That history does, in truth, present to the mind a long series of the most direful objects, assassinations, rebellions, anarchy, tyranny; and religion itself, either cruel, or gloomy and unsocial. An historian, who would paint it in its true colours, must take the pencil of Guercino or Salvator Rosa. But the most agreeable imagination can hardly figure to itself a more pleasing scene of private and publick felicity, than will naturally result from the Union, if all the prejudices against it,

it, and all distinctions that may tend, on either side, to keep up an idea of separate interests, or to revive a sharp remembrance of national animosities, can be removed.

DOUGLAS.

If they can be removed! I think it impossible they can be retained. To resist the Union is indeed to rebel against nature.—She has joined the two countries; has fenced them both with the sea, against the invasion of all other nations; but has laid them entirely open the one to the other. Accursed be he who endeavours to divide them!—*What God has joined, let no man put asunder.*



T H R E E

D I A L O G U E S,

BY ANOTHER HAND.

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OF THE

## DIALOGUE XXVI.

CADMUS—HERCULES.

HERCULES.

**D**O you pretend to sit as high on Olympus as Hercules? did you kill the Nemean lion, the Erymanthian boar, the Lernean serpent, and Stympthalian birds? did you destroy tyrants and robbers? You value yourself greatly on subduing one serpent: I did as much as that while I lay in my cradle.

CADMUS.

It is not on account of the serpent I boast myself a greater benefactor to Greece than you. Actions should be valued by their utility rather than their eclat. I taught Greece the art of writing, to which laws owe their precision and permanency. You subdued monsters; I civilized men. It is from untamed passions, not from wild beasts, that the greatest evils arise to human society. By wisdom, by art, by the united strength of civil community, men have been enabled to subdue the whole race of lions, bears, and serpents; and, what is more, to bind in laws and wholesome regulations the ferocious violence and dangerous treachery of the human disposition. Had lions been destroyed only in

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single

## DIALOGUES OF THE DEAD.

single combat, men would have had but a bad time of it; and what but laws could awe the men who killed the lions? The genuine glory, the proper distinction, of the rational species, arises from the perfection of the mental powers. Courage is apt to be fierce, and strength is often exerted in acts of oppression. But wisdom is the associate of justice; it assists her to form equal laws, to pursue right measures, to correct power, protect weakness, and to unite individuals in a common interest and general welfare. Heroes may kill tyrants; but it is wisdom and laws that prevent tyranny and oppression. The operations of policy far surpass the labours of Hercules, preventing many evils which valour and might cannot even redress. You heroes consider nothing but glory, and hardly regard whether the conquests which raise your fame be really beneficial to your country. Unhappy are the people who are governed by valour, not directed by prudence, and not mitigated by the gentle arts!

## HERCULES.

I do not expect to find an admirer of my strenuous life in the man who taught his countrymen to sit still, and read, and to lose the hours of youth and action in idle speculation and the sport of worlds.

C A D M U S.

## CADMUS.

An ambition to have a place in the registers of fame is the Eurytheus which imposes heroick labours on mankind. The Muses incite to action, as well as entertain the hours of repose; and, I think, you should honour them, for presenting to heroes such a noble recreation, as may prevent their taking up *the distaff*, when they lay down the club.

## HERCULES.

Wits as well as heroes can take up *the distaff*. What think you of their thin-spun systems of philosophy, or lascivious poems, or Milesian fables? Nay, what is still worse, are there not panegyricks on tyrants, and books that blaspheme the gods, and perplex the natural sense of right and wrong? I believe, if Eurytheus were to set me to work again, he would find me a worse task than any he imposed; he would make me read through a great library; and I would serve it as I did the Hydra; I would burn as I went on, that one chimera might not rise from another, to plague mankind. I should have valued myself more on clearing the library, than on cleansing the Augean stables.

## CADMUS.

It is in those libraries only that the memory of your labours exists. The heroes of Marathon, the patriots of Thermopylæ, owe  
Z 4
their



## DIALOGUES OF THE DEAD.

their immortality to me. All the wise institutions of lawgivers, and all the doctrines of sages, had perished in the ear, like a dream related, if letters had not preserved them. Oh, Hercules! it is not for the man who preferred Virtue to Pleasure to be an enemy to the Muses. Let Sardanapalus and the filken sons of luxury, who have wasted life in inglorious ease, despise the records of actions which bear no honourable testimony to their lives. But true merit, heroick virtue, each genuine offspring of immortal Jove, should honour the sacred source of lasting fame.

## HERCULES.

Indeed, if writers employed themselves only in recording the acts of great men, much might be said in their favour. But why do they trouble people with their meditations? can it signify to the world what an idle man has been thinking?

## CADMUS.

Yes, it may. The most important and extensive advantages mankind enjoy are greatly owing to men who have never quitted their closets. To them mankind is obliged for the facility and security of navigation. The invention of the compass has opened to them new worlds. The knowledge of the mechanical powers has enabled them to construct such wonderful machines, as perform  
what

what the united labour of millions by the severest drudgery could not accomplish. Agriculture too, the most useful of arts, has received its share of improvement from the same source. Poetry likewise is of excellent use, to enable the memory to retain with more ease, and to imprint with more energy upon the heart, precepts of virtue and virtuous actions. Since we left the world, from the little root of few letters, science has spread its branches over all nature, and raised its head to the heavens. Some philosophers have entered so far into the counsels of Divine Wisdom, as to explain much of the great operations of nature. The dimensions and distances of the planets, the causes of their revolutions, the path of comets, and the ebbing and flowing of tides, are understood and explained. Can any thing raise the glory of the human species more, than to see a little creature, inhabiting a small spot amidst innumerable worlds, taking a survey of the universe, comprehending its arrangement, and entering into the scheme of that wonderful connexion and correspondence of things so remote, and which it seems the utmost exertion of Omnipotence to have established? What a volume of wisdom, what a noble theology, do these discoveries open to us! While some superior geniuses have soared to these sublime subjects, other sagacious and diligent minds have been en-

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quiring

## DIALOGUES OF THE DEAD.

quiring into the most minute works of the infinite Artificer: the same care, the same providence, is exerted through the whole; and we should learn from it, that to true wisdom, utility and fitness appear perfection, and whatever is beneficial is noble.

## HERCULES.

I approve of science, as far as it is assistant to action. I like the improvement of navigation, and the discovery of the greater part of the globe, because it opens a wider field for the master spirits of the world to bustle in.

## CADMUS.

There spoke the soul of Hercules. But, if learned men be to be esteemed for the assistance they give to active minds in their schemes, they are not less to be valued for their endeavours to give them a right direction, and moderate their too great ardour. The study of history will teach the warrior and the legislator by what means armies have been victorious, and states have become powerful; and in the private citizen, they will inculcate the love of liberty and order. The writings of sages point out a private path of virtue, and shew that the best empire is self-government, and subduing our passions the noblest of conquests.

HER-

## HERCULES.

The true spirit of heroism acts by a sort of inspiration, and wants neither the experience of history, nor the doctrines of philosophers, to direct it. But do not arts and sciences render men effeminate, luxurious, and inactive? and can you deny that wit and learning are often made subservient to very bad purposes?

## CADMUS.

I will own that there are some natures so happily formed, they hardly want the assistance of a master and the rules of art, to give them force or grace in every thing they do. But these heaven-inspired geniuses are few. As learning flourishes only where ease, plenty, and mild government subsist; in so rich a soil, and under so soft a climate, the weeds of luxury will spring up among the flowers of art: but the spontaneous weeds would grow more rank, if they were allowed the undisturbed possession of the field. Letters keep a frugal temperate nation from growing ferocious, a rich one from becoming entirely sensual and debauched. Every gift of the gods is sometimes abused; but wit and fine talents, by a natural law, gravitate toward virtue: accidents may drive them out of their proper direction; but such accidents are a sort of prodigies; and, like other prodigies, it is an alarming omen, and of dire portent to the  
times.



## DIALOGUES OF THE DEAD.

times. For if Virtue cannot keep to her allegiance those men, who in their hearts confess her divine right, and know the value of her laws; on whose fidelity and obedience can she depend?—May such geniuses never descend to flatter vice, encourage Folly, or propagate Irreligion; but exert all their powers in the service of Virtue, and celebrate the noble choice of those who, like you, preferred her to Pleasure!

## DIALOGUE XXVII.

MERCURY—And a Modern Fine LADY.

MRS. MODISH.

**I**NDEED, Mr. Mercury, I cannot have the pleasure of waiting upon you now. I am engaged, absolutely engaged.

MERCURY.

I know you have an amiable affectionate husband and several fine children; but you need not be told, that neither conjugal attachments, maternal affections, nor even the care of a kingdom's welfare or a nation's glory, can excuse a person who has received a summons to the realms of Death. If the grim messenger were not as peremptory as unwelcome, Charon would not get a passenger (except now and then an hypochondriacal Englishman) once in a century. You must be content to leave your husband and family, and pass the Styx.

MRS. MODISH.

I did not mean to insist on any engagement with my husband and children; I never thought myself engaged to them. I had no engagements but such as were common to women of my rank. Look on my chimney-piece; and you will see I was engaged to the play on Mondays, balls on Tuesdays, the opera on Saturdays, and to card-assemblies  
the

## DIALOGUES OF THE DEAD.

the rest of the week, for two months to come; and it would be the rudest thing in the world not to keep my appointments. If you will stay for me till the summer-season, I will wait on you with all my heart. Perhaps the Elysian fields may be less detestable than the country in our world. Pray have you a fine Vauxhall and Ranelagh? I think I should not dislike drinking the Lethe waters when you have a full season.

MERCURY.

Surely you could not like to drink the waters of oblivion, who have made pleasure the business, end, and aim, of your life! It is good to drown cares: but who would wash away the remembrance of a life of gaiety and pleasure?

MRS. MODISH.

Diversions was indeed the business of my life; but as to pleasure, I have enjoyed none since the novelty of my amusements was gone off. Can one be pleased with seeing the same thing over and over again? Late hours and fatigue gave me the vapours, spoiled the natural cheerfulness of my temper, and even in youth wore away my youthful vivacity.

MERCURY.

If this way of life did not give you pleasure, why did you continue in it? I suppose you did not think it was very meritorious.

MRS. MODISH.

I was too much engaged to think at all: so far indeed my manner of life was agreeable enough.

enough. My friends always told me diversions were necessary, and my doctor assured me dissipation was good for my spirits; my husband insisted that it was not: and you know that one loves to oblige one's friends, comply with one's doctor, and contradict one's husband; and besides, I was ambitious to be thought *du bon ton* \*.

MERCURY.

*Bon ton*! what is that, Madam? Pray define it.

MRS. MODISH.

Oh Sir, excuse me; it is one of the privileges of the *bon ton*, never to define, or be defined. It is the child and the parent of jargon. It is—I can never tell you what it is: but I will try to tell you what it is not. In conversation, it is not wit; in manners, it is not politeness; in behaviour, it is not address: but it is a little like them all. It can only belong to people of a certain rank, who live in a certain manner, with certain persons, who have not certain virtues, and who have certain vices, and who inhabit a certain part of the town. Like a place by courtesy, it gets an higher rank than the person can claim; but which those who have a legal title to precedence dare not dispute, for fear of being thought not to understand the rules of politeness. Now, Sir, I have

\* *Du bon ton* is a cant phrase in the modern French language for the fashionable air of conversation and manners.

told



## DIALOGUES OF THE DEAD.

told you as much as I know of it, though I have admired and aimed at it all my life.

MERCURY.

Then, Madam, you have wasted your time, faded your beauty, and destroyed your health, for the laudable purposes of contradicting your husband, and being this something and this nothing called the *bon ton*.

MRS. MODISH.

What would you have had me do?

MERCURY.

I will follow your mode of instructing. I will tell you what I would not have had you do. I would not have had you sacrifice your time, your reason, and your duties, to fashion and folly. I would not have had you neglect your husband's happiness, and your childrens education.

MRS. MODISH.

As to the education of my daughters, I spared no expence: they had a dancing-master, musick-master, and drawing-master; and a French governess, to teach them behaviour and the French language.

MERCURY.

So their religion, sentiments, and manners, were to be learnt from a dancing-master, musick-master, and a chamber-maid! Perhaps they might prepare them to catch the *bon ton*. Your daughters must have been so educated, as to fit them to be wives without conjugal affection, and mothers without maternal care. I am sorry for the sort of life they are commencing, and  
for

for that which you have just concluded. Minos is a four old gentleman, without the least smattering of the *bon ton*; and I am in a fright for you. The best thing I can advise you is, to do in this world as you did in the other; keep happiness in your view, but never take the road that leads to it. Remain on this side Styx; wander about without end or aim; look into the Elysian fields; but never attempt to enter into them, lest Minos should push you into Tartarus: for duties neglected may bring on a sentence not much less severe than crimes committed.

## D I A L O G U E XXVIII.

PLUTARCH—CHARON—And a modern  
BOOKSELLER.

CHARON.

**H**ERE is a fellow who is very unwilling to land in our territories. He says, he is rich, has a great deal of business in the other world, and must needs return to it; he is so troublesome and obstreperous, I know not what to do with him. Take him under your care therefore, good Plutarch; you will easily awe him into order and decency, by the superiority an author has over a book-feller.

BOOKSELLER.

Am I got into a world so absolutely the reverse of that I left, that here *authors* domineer over *booksellers*? Dear Charon, let me go back, and I will pay any price for my passage. But, if I must stay, leave me not with any of those who are styled *classical authors*. As to you, Plutarch, I have a particular animosity against you, for having almost occasioned my ruin. When I first set up shop, understanding but little of business, I unadvisedly bought an edition of your *lives*; a pack of old Greeks and Romans, which  
cost

cost me a great sum of money. I could never get off above twenty sets of them. I sold a few to the Universities, and some to Eaton and Westminster; for it is reckoned a pretty book for boys and under-graduates; but, unless a man has the luck to light on a pedant, he shall not sell a set of them in twenty years.

## PLUTARCH.

From the merit of the subjects, I had hoped another reception for my works. I will own indeed, that I am not always perfectly accurate in every circumstance, nor do I give so exact and circumstantial a detail of the actions of my heroes, as may be expected from a biographer who has confined himself to one or two characters. A zeal to preserve the memory of great men, and to extend the influence of such noble examples, made me undertake more than I could accomplish in the first degree of perfection: but surely the characters of my illustrious men are not so imperfectly sketched, that they will not stand forth to all ages as patterns of virtue, and incitements to glory. My reflections are allowed to be deep and sagacious; and what can be more useful to a reader than a wise man's judgement on a great man's conduct? In my writings, you will find no rash censures, no undeserved encomiums, no mean compliance with popular opinions, no vain ostentation of critical skill,



nor any affected *finesse*. In my parallels, which used to be admired as pieces of excellent judgement, I compare with perfect impartiality one great man with another, and each with the rule of justice. If indeed latter ages have produced greater men and better writers, my heroes and my works ought to give place to them. As the world has now the advantage of much better rules of morality than the unassisted reason of poor Pagans could form, I do not wonder that those vices, which appeared to us as mere blemishes in great characters, should seem most horrid deformities in the purer eyes of the present age: a delicacy I do not blame, but admire and commend. And I must censure you for endeavouring, if you could publish better examples, to obtrude on your countrymen such as were defective. I rejoice at the preference which they give to perfect and unallayed virtue; and as I shall ever retain an high veneration for the illustrious men of every age, I should be glad you would give me some account of those persons, who, in wisdom, justice, valour, patriotism, have eclipsed my Solon, Numa, Camillus, and other boasts of Greece or Rome.

## BOOKSELLER.

Why, master Plutarch, you are talking Greek indeed. That work which repaired the loss I sustained by the costly edition of  
your

your books, was, *The lives of the Highway-men*: but I should never have grown rich, if it had not been by publishing *the lives of men that never lived*. You must know, that though in all times it was possible to have a great deal of learning and very little wisdom, yet it is only by a modern improvement in the art of writing, that a man may read all his life, and have no learning or knowledge at all; which begins to be an advantage of the greatest importance. There is as natural a war between your men of science and fools, as between the cranes and the pigmies of old. Most of our young men having deserted to the fools, the party of the learned is near being beaten out of the field; and I hope in a little while they will not dare to peep out of their forts and fastnesses at Oxford and Cambridge. There let them stay and study old musty moralists, till one fall in love with the Greek, another with the Roman virtue: but our men of the world should read our new books, which teach them to have no virtue at all. No book is fit for a gentleman's reading, which is not void of facts and of doctrines, that he may not grow a pedant in his morals or conversation. I look upon history (I mean real history) to be one of the worst kinds of study. Whatever has happened may happen again; and a well-bred man may unwarily mention a parallel instance he had met with in history, and be betrayed

into the awkwardness of introducing into his discourse a Greek, a Roman, or even a Gothick name. But when a gentleman has spent his time in reading adventures that never occurred, exploits that never were achieved, and events that not only never did, but never can happen, it is impossible that in life or in discourse he should ever apply them. *A secret history*, in which there is *no secret* and *no history*, cannot tempt Indiscretion to blab, or Vanity to quote; and by this means modern conversation flows gentle and easy, unincumbered with matter, and unburthened of instruction. As the present studies throw no weight or gravity into discourse and manners, the women are not afraid to read our books, which not only dispose to gallantry and coquetry, but give rules for them. Cæsar's Commentaries and the account of Xenophon's expedition are not more studied by military commanders, than our novels are by the fair: to a different purpose indeed; for their military maxims teach to conquer, ours to yield; those inflame the vain and idle love of glory, these inculcate a noble contempt of reputation. The women have greater obligations to our writers than the men. By the commerce of the world, men might learn much of what they get from books; but the poor women, who in their early youth are confined and restrained, if it were not for the friendly assistance of books, would

would remain long in an insipid purity of mind, with a discouraging reserve of behaviour.

PLUTARCH.

As to your men who have quitted the study of virtue for the study of vice, useful truth for absurd fancy, and real history for monstrous fiction, I have neither regard nor compassion for them: but I am concerned for the women who are betrayed into these dangerous studies; and I wish for their sakes I had expatiated more on the character of Lucretia and some other heroines.

BOOKSELLER.

I tell you, our women do not read in order to live or to die like Lucretia. If you would inform us, that a *billet-doux* was found in her cabinet after her death, or give an hint as if Tarquin really saw her in the arms of a slave; and that she killed herself, not to suffer the shame of a discovery; such anecdotes would sell very well. Or if, even by tradition, but better still if *by papers in the Portian family*, you could shew some probability that Portia died of *dram-drinking*; you would oblige the world very much; for you must know, that, next to new-invented characters, we are fond of new lights upon ancient characters; I mean, such lights as shew a reputed honest man to have been a concealed knave; an illustrious hero a pitiful

A a 4

coward,



## DIALOGUES OF THE DEAD.

coward, &c. Nay, we are so fond of these kinds of information, as to be pleased sometimes to see a character cleared from a vice or crime it has been charged with, provided the person concerned be actually dead. But in this case, the evidence must be authentick, and amount to a demonstration: in the other, a detection is not necessary; a slight suspicion will do, if it concerns a really good and great character.

PLUTARCH.

I am the more surprized at what you say of the taste of your contemporaries, as I met with a Frenchman, who assured me that less than a century ago he had written a much-admired life of Cyrus under the name of Artamenes, in which he ascribed to him far greater actions than those recorded of him by Xenophon and Herodorus; and that many of the great heroes of history had been treated in the same manner; that empires were gained and battles decided by the valour of a single man, imagination bestowing what nature has denied, and the system of human affairs rendered impossible.

BOOKSELLER.

I assure you, these books were very useful to the authors and their booksellers: and for whose benefit besides should a man write? These romances were very fashionable, and had a great sale: they fell in luckily with the humour of the age.

PLUTARCH.

## PLUTARCH.

Monfieur Scuderi tells me, they were written in the times of vigour and fpirit, in the evening of the gallant days of chivalry, which, though then declining, had left in the hearts of men a warm glow of courage and heroifm; and they were to be called to books, as to battle, by the found of the trumpet: he fays too, that, if writers had not accommodated themfelves to the prejudices of the age, and written of bloody battles and desperate encounters, their works would have been efteemed too effeminate an amufement for gentlemen. Hiftories of chivalry, inftead of enervating, tend to invigorate the mind, and endeavour to raife human nature above the condition which is naturally prefcribed to it; but as ftrict juftice, patriot motives, prudent counfels, and a difpaffionate choice of what upon the whole is fitteft and beft, do not direct thefe heroes of romance, they cannot ferve for inftruction and example, like the great characters of true hiftory. It has ever been my opinion, that only the clear and fteady light of truth can guide men to virtue, and that the leffon which is *impracticable* muft be *unufeful*. Whoever fhall defign to regulate his conduct by thefe visionary characters will be in the condition of fuperftitious people, who chufe rather to act by intimations they receive in the dreams of the night, than by the sober counfels of morning meditation.

Yet,

## DIALOGUES OF THE DEAD.

Yet, I confess, it has been the practice of many nations to incite men to *virtue* by relating the deeds of *fabulous heroes*; but surely it is the custom only of yours to incite them to *vice* by the history of *fabulous scoundrels*. Men of fine imagination have soared into the regions of fancy to bring back Aftrea: you go thither in search of Pandora—O disgrace to letters! O shame to the Muses!

## BOOKSELLER.

You express great indignation at our present race of writers; but, believe me, the fault lies chiefly on the side of the readers. As Monsieur Scuderi observed to you, authors must comply with the manners and disposition of those who are to read them. There must be a certain sympathy between the book and the reader, to create a good liking. Would you present a modern fine gentleman, who is negligently lolling in an easy chair, with the *labours of Hercules* for his recreation? or make him climb the Alps with Hannibal, when he is expiring with the fatigue of last night's ball? Our readers must be amused, flattered, soothed; such adventures must be offered to them as they would like to have a share in.

## PLUTARCH.

It should be the first object of writers, to correct the vices and follies of the age. I will allow as much compliance with the  
mode

mode of the times as will make truth and good morals agreeable. Your love of fictitious characters might be turned to good purpose, if those presented to the publick were to be formed on the rules of religion and morality. It must be confessed, that history, being employed only about illustrious persons, publick events, and celebrated actions, does not supply us with such instances of domestick merit as one could wish: our heroes are great in the field and the senate, and act well in great scenes on the theatre of the world: but the idea of a man, who in the silent retired path of life never deviates into vice, who considers no spectator but *the omniscient Being*, and solicits no applause but *his* approbation, is the noblest model that can be exhibited to mankind, and would be of the most general use. Examples of domestick virtue would be more particularly useful to women than those of great heroines. The virtues of women are blasted by the breath of publick fame, as flowers that grow on an eminence are faded by the sun and wind, which expand them. But true female praise, like the musick of the spheres, arises from a gentle, a constant, and an equal progress in the path marked out for them by their great Creator; and, like the heavenly harmony, it is not adapted to the gross ear of mortals, but is reserved for the delight of higher beings, by whose wise laws they were ordained to  
give



## DIALOGUES OF THE DEAD.

give a silent light, and shed a mild benignant influence on the world.

BOOKSELLER.

We have had some English and French writers who aimed at what you suggest. In the supposed character of Clarissa, (said a clergyman to me a few days before I left the world) one finds the dignity of heroism tempered by the meekness and humility of religion, a perfect purity of mind, and sanctity of manners: in that of Sir Charles Grandison, a noble pattern of every private virtue, with sentiments so exalted as to render him equal to every publick duty.

PLUTARCH.

Are both these characters by the same author?

BOOKSELLER.

Ay, master Plutarch; and what will surprise you more, this author has *printed* for me.

PLUTARCH.

By what you say, it is pity he should *print* any work but *his own*. Are there no other authors who write in this manner?

BOOKSELLER.

Yes, we have another writer of these imaginary histories; one who has not long since descended to these regions: his name is Fielding; and his works, as I have heard the  
best

best judges say, have a true spirit of comedy, and an exact representation of nature, with fine moral touches. He has not indeed given lessons of pure and consummate virtue; but he has exposed vice and meanness with all the powers of ridicule: and we have some other good wits, who have exerted their talents to the purposes you approve. Monsieur de Marivaux and some other French writers have also proceeded much upon the same plan, with a spirit and elegance which give their works no mean rank among the *belles lettres*. I will own that, when there is wit and entertainment enough in a book to make it sell, it is not the worse for good morals.

## CHARON.

I think, Plutarch, you have made this gentleman a little more humble; and now I will carry him the rest of his journey. But he is too frivolous an animal to present to wife Minos. I wish Mercury were here; he would damn him for his dulness. I have a good mind to carry him to the Danaïdes, and leave him to pour water into their vessels, which, like his late readers, are destined to eternal emptiness. Or shall I chain him to the rock, side to side by Prometheus, not for having attempted to steal celestial fire, in order to animate human forms, but for having endeavoured to extinguish that which Jupiter had imparted? or shall we constitute him

him *friseur* to Tisiphone, and make him curl up her locks with his fatires and libels?

PLUTARCH.

Minos does not esteem any thing frivolous that affects the morals of mankind; he punishes authors, as guilty of every fault they have countenanced, and every crime they have encouraged; and denounces heavy vengeance for the injuries which virtue or the virtuous have suffered in consequence of their writings.

F O U R

D I A L O G U E S,

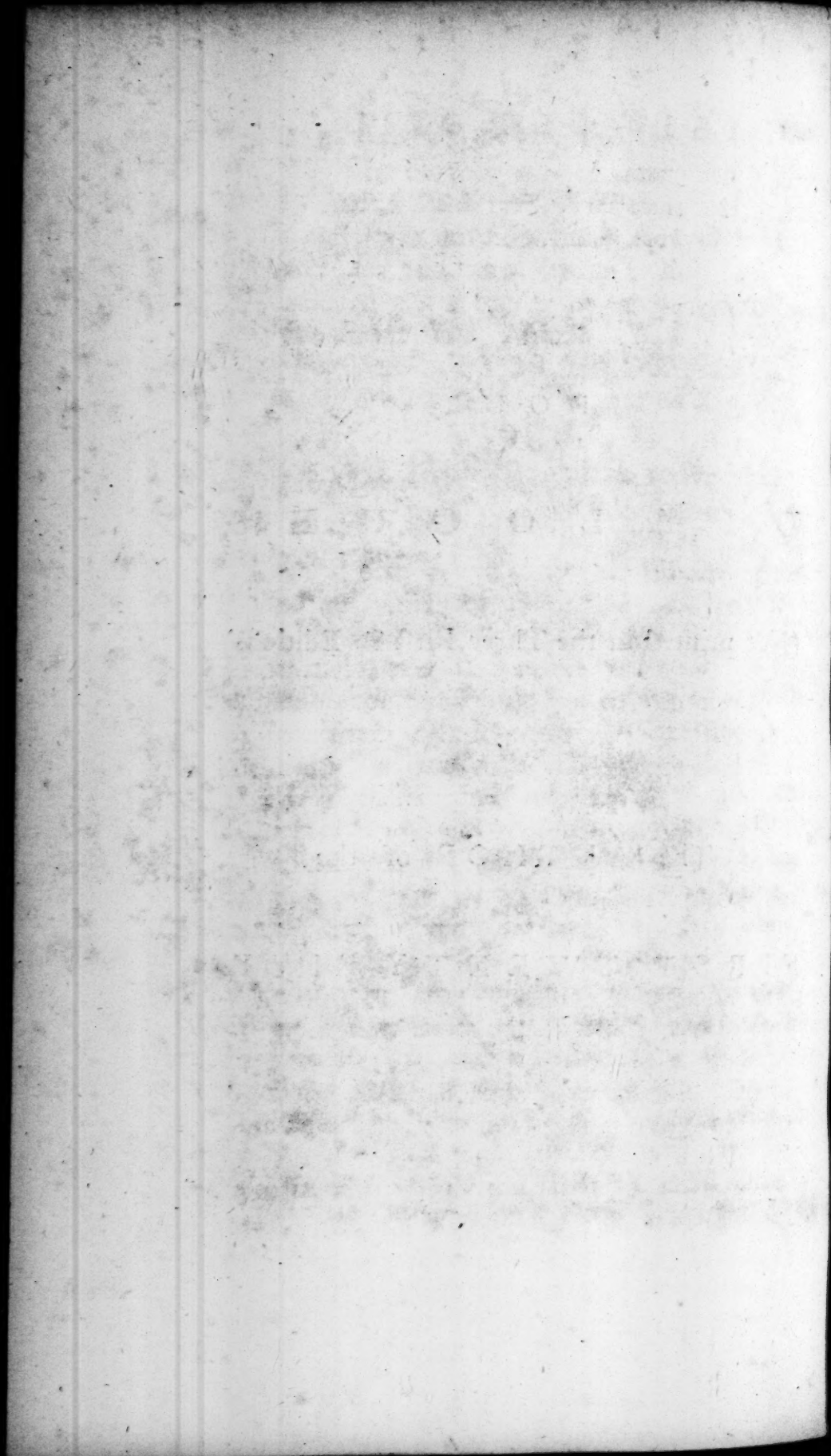
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## DIALOGUE XXIX.

PUBLIUS CORNELIUS SCIPIO AFRICANUS.  
—CAIUS JULIUS CÆSAR.

SCIPIO.

ALAS, Cæsar! how unhappily did you end a life, made illustrious by the greatest exploits in war, and most various civil talents!

CÆSAR.

Can Scipio wonder at the ingratitude of Rome to her generals? did not he reproach her with it in the epitaph he ordered to be inscribed upon his tomb at Liternum, that mean village in Campania, to which she had driven the conqueror of Hannibal and of Carthage? I also, after subduing her most dangerous enemies, the Helvetians, the Gauls, and the Germans, after raising her name to the highest pitch of glory, should have been deprived of my province, reduced to live as a private man, under the power of my enemies and the enviers of my greatness; nay, brought to a trial, and condemned by the judgement of a faction, if I had not led my victorious troops to Rome, and, by their assistance, after all my

VOL. II.

B b

offers

## DIALOGUES OF THE DEAD.

offers of peace had been iniquitously rejected, made myself master of a state, which knew so ill how to recompense superior merit. Resentment of this, together with the secret machinations of envy, produced not long afterwards a conspiracy of senators, and even of some whom I had most obliged and loved, against my life, which they basely took away by assassination.

SCIPIO.

You say you led your victorious troops to Rome. — How were they *your* troops? I thought the Roman armies had belonged to the republick, not to their generals.

CÆSAR.

They did so in your time. But, before I came to command them, Marius and Sylla had taught them, that they belonged to their generals. And I taught the senate, that a veteran army, affectionately attached to its leader, could give him all the treasures and honours of the state, without asking their leave.

SCIPIO.

Just gods! Did I then deliver my country from the invading Carthaginian, did I exalt it by my victories above all other nations, that it might become a richer prey to its own rebel soldiers, and their ambitious commanders?

CÆSAR.

CÆSAR.

How could it be otherwise? was it possible that the conquerors of Europe, Asia, and Africk, could tamely submit to descend from their triumphal chariots, and become subject to the authority of prætors and consuls, elected by a populace corrupted by bribes, or enslaved to a confederacy of factious nobles, who, without regard to merit, considered all the offices and dignities of the state as hereditary possessions belonging to their families?

SCIPIO.

If I thought it no dishonour, after triumphing over Hannibal, to lay down my fasces, and obey, as all my ancestors had done before me, the magistrates of the republic; such a conduct would not have dishonoured either Marius, or Sylla, or Cæsar. But you all dishonoured yourselves, when, instead of virtuous Romans, superior to your fellow-citizens in merit and glory, but equal to them in a due subjection to the laws, you became the enemies, the invaders, and the tyrants, of your country.

CÆSAR.

Was I the *enemy* of my country, in giving it a ruler fit to support all the majesty and weight of its empire? did I *invade* it, when I marched to deliver the people from the usurped dominion and insolence of a few senators? was I a *tyrant*, because I would

B b 2

not



## DIALOGUES OF THE DEAD.

not crouch under Pompey, and let him be thought my *superior*, when I felt he was not my *equal*?

SCIPIO.

Pompey had given you a noble example of moderation, in twice dismissing the armies, at the head of which he had performed such illustrious actions, and returning, a private citizen, into the bosom of his country.

CÆSAR.

His moderation was a cheat. He believed that the authority his victories had gained him would make him effectually master of the commonwealth, without the help of those armies. But, finding it difficult to subdue the united opposition of Crassus and me, he leagued himself with us; and, in consequence of that league, we three governed the empire. But, after the death of Crassus, my glorious achievements in subduing the Gauls raised such a jealousy in him, that he could no longer endure me as a partner in his power, nor could I submit to degrade myself into his subject.

SCIPIO.

Am I then to understand, that the civil war you engaged in was really a mere contest, whether you or Pompey should remain *sole lord of Rome*?

CÆSAR.

CÆSAR.

Not so—for I offered, in my letters to the  
 senate, to lay down my arms, if Pompey  
 at the same time would lay down his, and  
 leave the republick in freedom. Nor did I  
 resolve to draw the sword, till not only the  
 senate, overpowered by the fear of Pompey  
 and his troops, had rejected these offers;  
 but two tribunes of the people, for legally  
 and justly interposing their authority in my  
 behalf, had been forced to fly from Rome,  
 disguised in the habit of slaves, and take re-  
 fuge in my camp, for the safety of their  
 persons. My camp was therefore the asylum  
 of persecuted liberty; and my army sought  
 to avenge the violation of the rights and  
 majesty of the people, as much as to defend  
 the dignity of their general unjustly op-  
 pressed.

See Plu-  
tarch and  
Suetonius  
in Vit. Cæ-  
saris.  
Cæsar  
Comment.  
de Bello  
Civili,  
l. i.

SCIPIO.

You would therefore have me think that  
 you contended for the equality and liberty of  
 the Romans, against the tyranny of Pompey  
 and his lawless adherents. In such a war  
 I myself, if I had lived in your times, would  
 have willingly been your lieutenant. Tell  
 me then, on the issue of this honourable en-  
 terprize, when you had subdued all your  
 foes, and had no opposition remaining to  
 obstruct your intentions, did you establish  
 that liberty for which you fought? did you

B b 3

restore

## DIALOGUES OF THE DEAD.

restore the republick to what it was in my time?

CÆSAR.

I took the necessary measures to secure to myself the fruits of my victories; and gave a head to the empire, which could neither subsist without one, nor find another so well suited to the greatness of the body.

SCIPIO.

There the true character of Cæsar was seen unmasked.—You had managed so skilfully in the measures which preceded the civil war, your offers were so specious, and there appeared so much violence in the conduct of your enemies, that, if you had fallen in that war, posterity might have doubted whether you were not a victim to the interests of your country. But your success, and the despotism you afterwards exercised, took off those disguises, and shewed clearly that the aim of all your actions was tyranny.

CÆSAR.

Let us not deceive ourselves with *sounds* and *names*.—That great minds should aspire to sovereign power, is a fixed law of nature. It is an injury to mankind, if the highest abilities be not placed in the highest stations. Had you, Scipio, been kept down by the republican jealousy of Cato the censor, Hannibal would have never been recalled out of Italy, nor defeated in Africk. And if I had

not been treacherously murdered by the daggers of Brutus and Crassus, my sword would have revenged the defeat of Crassus, and added the empire of Parthia to that of Rome. Nor was my government tyrannical. It was mild, humane, and bounteous. The world would have been happy under it, and wished its continuance: but my death broke the pillars of the publick tranquillity, and brought upon the whole empire a direful scene of calamity and confusion.

SCIPIO.

You say that great minds will naturally aspire to sovereign power. But, if they are *good* as well as *great*, they will regulate their ambition by the laws of their country. The laws of Rome permitted me to aspire to the conduct of the war against Carthage; but they did not permit you to turn her arms against herself, and subject her to your will. The breach of one law of liberty is a greater evil to a nation than the loss of a province; and, in my opinion, the conquest of the whole world would not be enough to compensate for the total loss of their freedom.

CÆSAR.

You talk finely, Africanus.—But ask yourself, whether the height and dignity of your mind, that noble pride which accompanies the magnanimity of a hero, could always

B b 4

stoop



## DIALOGUES OF THE DEAD.

stoop to a nice conformity with the laws of your country? Is there a law of liberty more essential, more sacred, than that which obliges every member of a free community to submit himself to a trial, upon a legal charge brought against him for a publick misdemeanour? In what manner did you answer a regular accusation from a tribune of the people, who charged you with embezzling the money of the state? You told your judges, that *on that day you had vanquished Hannibal and Carthage*, and bad them *follow you to the temples to give thanks to the gods*. Nor could you ever be brought to stand a legal trial, or justify those accounts which you had torn in the senate, when they were questioned there by two magistrates in the name of the Roman people. Was this acting like the subject of a free state? had your victory procured you an exemption from justice? had it given into your hands the money of the republick without account? If it had, you were *king of Rome*. Pharsalia, Thapsus, and Munda, could do no more for me.

## S C I P I O.

I did not question the right of bringing me to a trial; but I disdained to plead in vindication of a character so unspotted as mine. My whole life had been an answer to that infamous charge,

CÆSAR.

CÆSAR.

It may be so: and, for my part, I admire the magnanimity of your behaviour. But I should condemn it as repugnant and destructive to liberty, if I did not pay more respect to the dignity of a great general, than to the forms of a democracy, or the rights of a tribune.

SCIPIO.

You are endeavouring to confound my <sup>Suetonius,</sup> cause with yours; but they are exceedingly <sup>in Cæsar.</sup> different. You apprehended a sentence of condemnation against you for some part of your conduct, and, to prevent it, made an impious war on your country, and reduced her to servitude. I trusted the justification of my affronted innocence to the opinion of my judges, scorning to plead for myself against a charge unsupported by any other proof than bare suspicions and surmises. But I made no resistance: I kindled no civil war: I left Rome undisturbed in the enjoyment of her liberty. Had the malice of my accusers been ever so violent, had it threatened my destruction; I should have chosen much rather to turn my sword against my own bosom, than against that of my country.

CÆSAR.

You beg the question, in supposing that I really hurt my country by giving her a master. When Cato advised the senate to make Pompey *sole consul*, he did it upon this principle,

See Plu-  
tarch, Life  
of Cæsar.

principle, *that any kind of government is preferable to anarchy.* The truth of this, I presume, no man of sense will contest; and the anarchy, which that zealous defender of liberty so much apprehended, would have continued in Rome, if that power, which the urgent necessity of the state conferred upon me, had not removed it.

SCIPIO.

Pompey and you had brought that anarchy on the state, in order to serve your own ends. It was owing to the corruption, the factions, and the violence, which you had encouraged, from an opinion that the senate would be forced to submit to an absolute power in your hands, as a remedy against those intolerable evils. But Cato judged well, in thinking it eligible to make Pompey *sole consul*, rather than your *dictator*; because experience had shewn, that Pompey respected the forms of the Roman constitution; and, though he fought, by bad means as well as good, to obtain the highest magistracies and the most honourable commands, yet he laid them down again, and contented himself with remaining superior in credit to any other citizen.

CÆSAR.

If all the difference between my ambition and Pompey's were only, as you represent it, in a greater or less respect for *the forms of the*

*constitution*; I think it was hardly becoming such a patriot as Cato to take part in our quarrel, much less to kill himself rather than yield to my power.

SCIPIO.

It is easier to revive *the spirit of liberty* in a government where the *forms* of it remain unchanged, than where they have been totally disregarded and abolished. But I readily own, that the balance of the Roman constitution had been destroyed by the excessive and illegal authority, which the people were induced to confer upon Pompey, before any extraordinary honours or commands had been demanded by you. And that is, I think, your best excuse.

CÆSAR.

Yes, surely.—The favourers of the *Manilian law* had an ill grace in desiring to limit the commissions I obtained from the people, according to the rigour of certain absolute republican laws, no more regarded in my time than the Sibylline oracles, or the pious institutions of Numa.

SCIPIO.

It was the misfortune of your time, that they were not regarded. A virtuous man would not take from a deluded people such favours as they ought not to bestow. I have a right to say this, because I chid the Roman people, when, over-heated by gratitude for the  
the



Livius,  
l. lxxxviii.  
sect. 56.

the services I had done them, they desired to make me *perpetual consul* and *dictator*. Hear this, and blush.—What I refused to accept, you snatched by force.

CÆSAR.

Tiberius Gracchus reproached you with the inconsistency of your conduct, when, after refusing these offers, you so little respected the Tribunitian authority. But thus it must happen. We are naturally fond of the idea of liberty, till we come to suffer by it, or find it an impediment to some predominant passion; and then we wish to controul it, as you did most despotically, by refusing to submit to the justice of the state.

SCIPIO.

I have answered before to that charge. Tiberius Gracchus himself, though my personal enemy, thought it became him to stop the proceedings against me; not for my sake, but for the honour of my country, whose dignity suffered with mine. Nevertheless, I acknowledge my conduct in that business was not absolutely blameless. The generous pride of virtue was too strong in my mind. It made me forget I was creating a dangerous precedent, in declining to plead to a legal accusation, brought against me by a magistrate invested with the majesty of the whole

whole Roman people. It made me unjustly accuse my country of ingratitude, when she had shewn herself grateful even beyond the true bounds of policy and justice, by not inflicting upon me any penalty for so irregular a proceeding. But, at the same time, what a proof did I give of moderation and respect for her liberty, when my utmost resentment could impel me to nothing more violent than a voluntary retreat, and quiet banishment of myself from the city of Rome! Scipio Africanus, offended, and living a private man, in a country-house at Liternum, was an example of more use to secure the equality of the Roman commonwealth, than all the power of its tribunes.

CÆSAR.

I would rather have been thrown down the Tarpeian rock, than have retired, as you did, to the obscurity of a village, after acting the first part on the greatest theatre of the world.

SCIPIO.

An usurper exalted on the highest throne of the universe is not so glorious as I was in that obscure retirement. I hear indeed, that you, Cæsar, have been *deified* by the flattery of some of your successors. But the impartial judgement of history has consecrated my name, and ranks me in the first class of heroes

heroes and patriots : whereas the highest praise her records, even under the dominion usurped by your family, have given to you, is, that your courage and talents were equal to the object your ambition aspired to, the empire of the world ; and that you exercised a sovereignty unjustly acquired with a magnanimous clemency. But it would have been better for your country, and better for mankind, if you had never existed.

## DIALOGUE XXX.

PLATO—DIOGENES.

DIOGENES.

PLATO, stand off.—A true philosopher, as I was, is no company for a courtier of the tyrant of Syracuse. I would avoid you, as one infected with the most noisome of plagues, the plague of slavery.

PLATO.

He, who can mistake a brutal pride and savage indecency of manners for freedom, may naturally think that the being in a court (however virtuous one's conduct, however free one's language there) is slavery. But I was taught by my great master, the incomparable Socrates, that the business of true philosophy is to consult and promote the happiness of society. She must not therefore be confined to a *tub* or a *cell*. Her sphere is in senates, or the cabinets of kings. While your sect is employed in snarling at the great, or buffooning with the vulgar; she is counseling those who govern nations, infusing into their minds humanity, justice, temperance, and the love of true glory, resisting their passions when they transport them beyond the bounds of virtue, and fortifying their reason by the antidotes she administers against the poison of flattery.

DIO-



DIOGENES.

You mean to have me understand, that you went to the court of the Younger Dionysius, to give him antidotes against the poison of flattery. But I say, he sent for you only to sweeten the cup, by mixing it more agreeably, and rendering the flavour more delicate. His vanity was too nice for the nauseous common draught; but your seasoning gave it a relish, which made it go down most delightfully, and intoxicated him more than ever. Oh! there is no flatterer half so dangerous to a prince as a fawning philosopher!

PLATO.

If you call it fawning, that I did not treat him with such unmannerly rudeness as you did Alexander the Great when he visited you at Athens, I have nothing to say. But, in truth, I made my company agreeable to him, not for any ends which regarded only myself, but that I might be useful both to him and to his people. I endeavoured to give a right turn to his vanity; and know, Diogenes, that whoever will serve mankind, but more especially princes, must compound with their weaknesses, and take as much pains to gain them over to virtue by an honest and prudent complaisance, as others do to seduce them from it by a criminal adulation.

DIO-

## DIOGENES.

A little of my sagacity would have shewn you, that, if this was your purpose, your labour was lost in that court. Why did you not go and preach chastity to Lais? A philosopher in a brothel, reading lectures on the beauty of continence and decency, is not a more ridiculous animal, than a philosopher in the cabinet, or at the table of a tyrant, descanting on liberty and publick spirit! What effect had the lessons of your famous disciple Aristotle upon Alexander the Great, a prince far more capable of receiving instruction than the Younger Dionysius? did they hinder him from killing his best friend, Clitus, for speaking to him with freedom; or from fancying himself a god, because he was adored by the wretched slaves he had vanquished? When I desired him *not to stand between me and the sun*, I humbled his pride more, and consequently did him more good, than Aristotle had done by all his former precepts.

## PLATO.

Yet he owed to those precepts, that, notwithstanding his excesses, he appeared not unworthy the empire of the world. Had the tutor of his youth gone with him into Asia, and continued always at his ear, the authority of that wise and virtuous man

## DIALOGUES OF THE DEAD.

might have been able to stop him, even in the riot of conquest, from giving way to those passions which dishonoured his character.

## DIOGENES.

If he had gone into Asia, and had not flattered the king as obsequiously as Hæphestion, he would, like Callisthenes, whom he sent thither as his deputy, have been put to death for high treason. The man who will not flatter must live independent, as I did, and prefer a tub to a palace.

## PLATO.

Do you pretend, Diogenes, that, because you were never in a court, you never flattered? How did you gain the affection of the people of Athens, but by soothing their ruling passion, the desire of hearing their superiors abused? Your cynic railing was to them the most acceptable flattery. This you well understood; and made your court to the vulgar, always envious and malignant, by trying to lower all dignity and confound all order: you made your court, I say, as servilely, and with as much offence to virtue, as the basest flatterer ever did to the most corrupted prince. But true philosophy will disdain to act either of these parts. Neither in the assemblies of the people, nor in the  
cabinets

cabinets of kings, will she obtain favour by fomenting any bad dispositions. If her endeavours to do good prove unsuccessful, she will retire with honour; as an honest physician departs from the house of a patient, whose distemper he finds incurable, or who refuses to take the medicines he prescribes. But if she succeeds; if, like the musick of Orpheus, her sweet persuasions can mitigate the ferocity of the multitude, and tame their minds to a due obedience to laws and reverence for magistrates; or if she can form a Timoleon, or a Numa Pompilius, to the government of a state; how meritorious is the work! One king, nay, one minister, or counsellor of state, imbued with her precepts, is of more value than all the speculative, retired philosophers, or cynical revilers of princes and magistrates, that ever lived upon earth.

## DIOGENES.

Don't tell me of the musick of Orpheus, and of his taming wild beasts. A wild beast brought to *crouch* and *lick the hand of a master* is a much viler animal than he was in his natural state of ferocity. You seem to think that the business of philosophy is to *polish men into slaves*; but I say, it is to teach them to assert, with an untamed and generous spirit, their independence and freedom.

C c 2

You



## DIALOGUES OF THE DEAD.

You profess to instruct those who want to *ride* their fellow-creatures, how to do it with an easy and gentle rein; but I would have them thrown off, and trampled under the feet of all their deluded or insulted equals, on whose backs they have mounted. Which of us two is the truest friend to mankind?

PLATO.

According to your notions, all government is destructive to liberty; but I think that no liberty can subsist without government. A state of society is the *natural* state of mankind. They are impelled to it, by their wants, their infirmities, their affections. The laws of society are rules of life and action necessary to secure their happiness in that state. Government is the due enforcing of those laws. That government is the best, which does this most effectually and most equally; and that people is the freest, which is most submissively obedient to such a government.

DIODENES.

Shew me the government which makes no other use of its power than duly to enforce the laws of society; and I will own it is entitled to the most absolute submission from all its subjects.

PLATO.

P L A T O.

I cannot shew you perfection in human institutions. It is far more easy to blame them than it is to amend them. Much may be wrong in the best: but a good man respects the laws and the magistrates of his country.

D I O G E N E S.

As for the laws of my country, I did so far respect them, as not to philosophize to the prejudice of the first and greatest principle of nature and of wisdom, self-preservation. Though I loved to prate about high matters as well as Socrates, I did not chuse to drink hemlock after his example. But you might as well have bid me *love* an ugly woman because she was drest up in the gown of Lais, as *respect* a fool or a knave because he was attired in the robe of a magistrate.

P L A T O.

All I desired of you was, not to amuse yourself and the populace by throwing dirt upon the robe of a magistrate, merely because he wore that robe, and you did not.

D I O G E N E S.

A philosopher cannot better display his wisdom, than by throwing contempt on that

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pageantry,

## DIALOGUES OF THE DEAD.

pageantry, which the ignorant multitude gaze at with a senseless veneration.

PLATO,

He who tries to make the multitude *venerate nothing* is more senseless than they. Wise men have endeavoured to excite an awful reverence in the minds of the vulgar for external ceremonies and forms, in order to secure their obedience to religion and government, of which these are the symbols. Can a *philosopher* desire to defeat that good purpose?

DIOGENES.

Yes, if he see it abused, to support the evil purposes of superstition and tyranny.

PLATO.

May not the abuse be corrected, without losing the benefit? is there no difference between *reformation* and *destruction*?

DIOGENES.

*Half-measures* do nothing. He who desires to *reform*, must not be afraid to *pull down*.

PLATO.

I know that you and your sect are for *pulling down every thing that is above your own*

*own level.* Pride and envy are the motives that set you all to work. Nor can one wonder that passions, the influence of which is so general, should give you many disciples and many admirers.

DIOGENES.

When you have established *your republic*, if you will admit me into it, I promise you to be *there* a most *respectful* subject.

PLATO.

I am conscious, Diogenes, that *my republic* was imaginary, and could never be established. But they shew as little knowledge of what is practicable in politicks, as I did in that book, who suppose that the liberty of any civil society can be maintained by the destruction of order and decency, or promoted by the petulance of unbridled defamation.

DIOGENES.

I never knew any government angry at defamation, when it fell on those who disliked or obstructed its measures. But I well remember, that the thirty tyrants at Athens called opposition to them *the destruction of order and decency*.



P L A T O.

Things are not altered by names.

D I O G E N E S.

No—but names have a strange power to impose on weak understandings. If, when you were in Egypt, you had laughed at the worship of an onion; the priests would have called you an atheist, and the people would have stoned you. But, I presume, that, to have the honour of being initiated into the mysteries of that reverend hierarchy, you bowed as low to it as any of their devout disciples. Unfortunately my neck was not so pliant; and therefore I was never initiated into their mysteries either of religion or government, but was feared or hated by all who thought it their interest to make them be respected.

P L A T O.

Your vanity found its account in that fear and that hatred. The high priest of a deity, or the ruler of a state, is much less distinguished from the vulgar herd of mankind, than the scoffer at all religion, and the despoiler of all dominion.—But let us end our dispute. I feel my folly, in continuing to  
argue

argue with one, who, in reasoning, does not seek to come at truth, but merely to shew his wit. Adieu, Diogenes. I am going to converse with the shades of Pythagoras, Solon, and Bias. — You may jest with Aristophanes, or rail with Therfites.

D I A-

## DIALOGUES OF THE DEAD.

## DIALOGUE XXXI.

ARISTIDES—PHOCION—DEMOSTHENES.

ARISTIDES.

**H**OW could it happen, that Athens, after having recovered an equality with Sparta, should be forced to submit to the dominion of Macedon, when she had two such great men as Phocion and Demosthenes at the head of her state?

PHOCION.

It happened because our opinions of her interests in foreign affairs were totally different; which made us act with a constant and pernicious opposition, the one to the other.

ARISTIDES.

I wish to hear from you both (if you will indulge my curiosity) on what principles you could form such contrary judgements concerning points of such moment to the safety of your country, which you equally loved.

DEMOS-

## DEMOSTHENES.

My principles were the same with yours, Aristides. I laboured to maintain the independence of Athens against the incroaching ambition of Macedon, as you had maintained it against that of Persia. I saw that our own strength was unequal to the enterprize; but what we could not do alone, I thought might be done by a union of the principal states of Greece; such a union as had been formed by you and Themistocles, in opposition to the Persians. To effect this, was the great, the constant, aim of my policy; and, though traversed in it by many whom the gold of Macedon had corrupted, and by Phocion, whom alone, of all the enemies to my system, I must acquit of corruption, I so far succeeded, that I brought into the field of Chæronea an army equal to Philip's. The event was unfortunate; but Aristides will not judge of the merits of a statesman by the accidents of war.

## PHOCION.

Do not imagine, Aristides, that I was less desirous than Demosthenes to preserve the independence and liberty of my country. But, before I engaged the Athenians in a war *not absolutely necessary*, I thought it proper to consider what the event of a battle would  
probably



## DIALOGUES OF THE DEAD.

probably be. That which I feared, came to pass : the Macedonians were victorious, and Athens was ruined.

## DEMOSTHENES.

Would Athens not have been ruined if no battle had been fought ? Could you, Phocion, think it safety, to have our freedom depend on the moderation of Philip ? and what had we else to protect us, if no confederacy had been formed to resist his ambition ?

## PHOCION.

I saw no wisdom in accelerating the downfall of my country, by a rash activity in provoking the resentment of an enemy, whose arms, I foretold, would in the issue prove superior, not only to ours, but to those of any confederacy we were able to form. My maxim was, "That a state, which cannot make  
" itself stronger than any of its neighbours,  
" should live in friendship with that power  
" which is the strongest." But, the more apparent it was that our strength was inferior to that of Macedon, the more you laboured to induce us, by all the vehemence of your oratory, to take such measures as tended to render Philip our enemy, and exasperate him more against us than any other nation. This I thought a rash conduct. It was not by orations that the dangerous war you had  
kindled

kindled could finally be determined : nor did your triumphs over me in an assembly of the people intimidate any Macedonian in the field of Chæronea, or stop you yourself from flying out of that field.

## DEMOSTHENES.

My flight thence, I must own, was ignominious to me; but it affects not the question we are agitating now, whether the counsels I gave to the people of Athens, as a statesman and a publick minister, were right or wrong. When first I excited them to make war against Philip, the victories gained by Chabrias, in which you, Phocion, had a share, particularly that of Naxos, which completely restored to us the empire of the sea, had enabled us to maintain, not only our own liberty, but that of all Greece, in the defence of which we had formerly acquired so much glory, and which our ancestors thought so important to the safety and independence of Athens. Philip's power was but beginning, and supported itself more by craft than force. I saw, and I warned my countrymen in due time, how impolitick it would be, to suffer his machinations to be carried on with success, and his strength to increase by continual acquisitions, without resistance. I exposed the weakness of that narrow, that short-sighted policy, which looked no further than to our own immediate

## DIALOGUES OF THE DEAD.

diate borders, and imagined that whatsoever lay out of those bounds was foreign to our interests, and unworthy of our care. The force of my remonstrances roused the Athenians to a more vigilant conduct. Then it was, that the orators, whom Philip had corrupted, loudly inveighed against me, as alarming the people with imaginary dangers, and drawing them into quarrels in which they had really no concern. This language, and the fair professions of Philip, who was perfectly skilled in *the royal art of dissembling*, were often so prevalent, that many favourable opportunities of defeating his designs were unhappily lost. Yet sometimes, by the spirit with which I animated the Athenians and other neighbouring states, I stopt the progress of his arms, and opposed to him such obstacles as cost him much time and much labour to remove. You yourself, Phocion, at the head of fleets and armies sent against him by decrees which I had proposed, vanquished his troops in Eubœa, and saved from him Bysantium, with other cities of our allies on the coasts of the Hellespont, from which you drove him with shame.

## PHOCION.

The proper use of those advantages was, to secure a peace to Athens, which they inclined him to keep. His ambition was checked; but his forces were not so much dimi-

diminished as to render it safe to provoke him to further hostilities.

## DEMOSTHENES.

His courage and policy were indeed so superior to ours, that, notwithstanding his defeats, he was soon in a condition to pursue the great plan of conquest and dominion, which he had formed long before, and from which he never desisted. Thus, through indolence on our side, and activity on his, things were brought to such a crisis, that I saw no hope of delivering all Greece from his yoke, but by confederating against him the Athenians and the Thebans; which league I effected. Was it not better to fight for the independence of our country in conjunction with Thebes than alone? Would a battle lost in Bœotia be so fatal to Athens, as one lost in our own territory, and under our own walls?

## PHOCION.

You may remember, that, when you were eagerly urging this argument, I desired you to consider, not where we should fight, but how we should be conquerors: for, if we were vanquished, all sorts of evils and dangers would be instantly at our gates.

## ARISTIDES.

Did not you tell me, Demosthenes, when you began to speak upon this subject, that  
you



## DIALOGUES OF THE DEAD.

you brought into the field of Chæronea an army equal to Philip's?

DEMOSTHENES.

I did, and believe that Phocion will not contradict me.

ARISTIDES.

But, though equal in number, it was, perhaps, much inferior to the Macedonians in valour and military discipline.

DEMOSTHENES.

The courage shewn by our army excited the admiration of Philip himself; and their discipline was inferior to none in Greece.

ARISTIDES.

What then occasioned their defeat?

DEMOSTHENES.

The bad conduct of their generals.

ARISTIDES.

Why was the command not given to Phocion, whose abilities had been proved on so many other occasions? was it offered to him, and did he refuse to accept it? You are silent, Demosthenes. I understand your silence. You are unwilling to tell me, that, having the power, by your influence over the people, to confer the command on what Athenian you pleased, you were induced, by the spirit of party, to lay aside a great general, who had been always successful, who had the chief confidence of your troops  
and

and of your allies, in order to give it to men, zealous indeed for your measures, and full of military ardour, but of little capacity or experience in the conduct of a war. You cannot plead, that, if Phocion had led your troops against Philip, there was any danger of his basely betraying his trust. Phocion could not be a traitor. You had seen him serve the republick, and conquer for it, in wars, the undertaking of which he had strenuously opposed, in wars with Philip. How could you then be so negligent of the safety of your country, as not to employ him in this, the most dangerous of all she ever had waged? If Chares and Lycicles, the two generals you chose to conduct it, had commanded the Grecian forces at Marathon and Plataea, we should have lost those battles. All the men whom you sent to fight the Macedonians under such leaders were victims to the animosity between you and Phocion, which made you deprive them of the necessary benefit of his wise direction. This I think the worst blemish of your administration. In other parts of your conduct, I not only acquit, but greatly applaud and admire you. With the sagacity of a most consummate statesman, you penetrated the deepest designs of Philip; you saw all the dangers, which threatened Greece from that quarter, while they were yet at a distance; you exhorted your countrymen to make a

Vol. II, D d timely

timely provision for their future security; you spread the alarm through all the neighbouring states; you combined the most powerful in a confederacy with Athens; you carried the war *out of Attica*, which (let Phocion say what he will) was safer than meeting it *there*; you brought it, after all that had been done by the enemy to strengthen himself and weaken us, after the loss of Amphipolis, Olynthus, and Potidæa, the outguards of Athens; you brought it, I say, to the decision of a battle with equal forces. When this could be effected, there was evidently nothing so desperate in our circumstances, as to justify an inaction, which might probably make them worse, but could not make them better. Phocion thinks that a state, which cannot itself be the strongest, should live in friendship with that power which is the strongest. But, in my opinion, *such friendship* is no better than *servitude*. It is more adviseable to endeavour to supply what is wanting in our own strength, by a conjunction with others who are equally in danger. This method of preventing the ruin of our country was tried by Demosthenes. Nor yet did he neglect, by all practicable means, to augment, at the same time, our internal resources. I have heard, that, when he found the publick treasure exhausted, he replenished it, with very great peril to himself, by bringing into it money appropriated before to the entertainment

tainment of the people, against the express prohibition of a popular law, which made it death to propose the application thereof to any other use. This was virtue, this was *true and genuine patriotizm*. He owed all his importance and power in the state to the favour of the people: yet, in order to serve the state, he did not fear, at the evident hazard of his life, to offend their darling passion, and appeal against it to their reason.

## PHOCION.

For this action I praise him. It was indeed far more dangerous for a minister at Athens to violate that absurd and extravagant law than any of those of Solon. But, though he restored our finances, he could not restore our lost virtue; he could not give that firm health, that vigour to the state, which is the result of pure morals, of strict order and civil discipline, of integrity in the old, and obedience in the young. I therefore dreaded a conflict with the solid strength of Macedon, where corruption had yet made but a very small progress; and was happy that Demosthenes did not oblige me, against my own inclination, to be the general of such a people in such war.

## ARISTIDES.

I fear that your just contempt of the greater number of those who composed the democracy so disgusted you with this mode



## DIALOGUES OF THE DEAD.

and form of government, that you were as averse to serve under it, as others, with less ability and virtue than you, were desirous of obtruding themselves into its service. But, though such a reluctance proceeds from a very noble cause, and seems agreeable to the dignity of a great mind in bad times; yet it is a fault against the highest of moral obligations, the love of our country: for, how unworthy soever individuals may be, the publick is always respectable, always dear to the virtuous.

## PHOCION.

True: but no obligation can lie upon a citizen to seek a publick charge, when he foresees that his obtaining of it will be uselels to his country. Would you have had me solicit the command of an army which I believed would be beaten?

## ARISTIDES.

It is not permitted to a state to despair of its safety, till its utmost efforts have been made without success. If you had commanded the army at Chæronea, you might possibly have changed the event of the day: but, if you had not, you would have died more honourably there, than in a prison at Athens, betrayed by a vain confidence in the insecure friendship of a perfidious Macedonian.

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## DIALOGUE XXXII.

MARCUS AURELIUS PHILOSOPHUS  
—SERVIUS TULLIUS.

SERVIUS TULLIUS.

YES, Marcus, though I own you to have been the first of mankind in virtue and goodness; though, while you governed, philosophy sat on the throne, and diffused the benign influences of her administration over the whole Roman empire; yet, *as a king*, I might, perhaps, pretend to a merit even superior to yours.

MARCUS AURELIUS.

That philosophy you ascribe to me has taught me to feel my own defects, and to venerate the virtues of other men. Tell me, therefore, in what consisted the superiority of your merit *as a king*.

SERVIUS TULLIUS.

It consisted in this, *that I gave my people freedom*. I diminished, I limited, the kingly power, when it was placed in my hands. I need not tell you, that the plan of government instituted by me was adopted by the Romans, when they had driven out Tarquin, the destroyer of their liberty; and gave its form to that republick, composed of  
a due

a due mixture of the regal, aristocratical, and democratical powers, the strength and wisdom of which subdued the world. Thus all the glory of that great people, who for many ages excelled the rest of mankind in the arts of war and of policy, belongs originally to me.

MARCUS AURELIUS.

There is much truth in what you say. But would not the Romans have done better, if, after the expulsion of Tarquin, they had vested the regal power in a *limited monarch*, instead of placing it in two annual elective magistrates, with the title of consuls? This was a great deviation from your plan of government; and, I think, an unwise one. For a *divided royalty* is a solecism, an absurdity in politicks. Nor was the regal power, committed to the administration of consuls, continued in their hands long enough to enable them to finish any difficult war, or other act of great moment. Hence arose a necessity of prolonging their commands beyond the legal term; of shortening the interval prescribed by the laws between the elections to those offices; and of granting extraordinary commissions and powers; by all which, the republick was in the end destroyed.

## DIALOGUE XXXII.

407

SERVIUS TULLIUS.

The revolution which ensued upon the death of Lucretia was made with so much anger, that it is no wonder the Romans abolished in their fury the name of king, and desired to weaken a power, the exercise of which had been so grievous; though the doing this was attended with all the inconveniencies you have justly observed. But, if anger acted too violently in reforming abuses, philosophy might have wisely corrected that error. Marcus Aurelius might have new-modeled the constitution of Rome. He might have made it *a limited monarchy*; leaving to the emperors all the power that was necessary to govern a wide-extended empire, and to the senate and people all the liberty that could be consistent with order and obedience to government; a liberty purged of faction, and guarded against anarchy.

MARCUS AURELIUS.

I should have been happy indeed, if it had been in my power to do such good to my country. But the gods themselves cannot force their blessings on men who by their vices are become incapable to receive them. Liberty, like power, is only good for those who possess it when it is under the constant direction of virtue. No laws can have force enough to hinder it from degenerating into faction and anarchy, where the morals of a  
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nation



## DIALOGUES OF THE DEAD.

nation are depraved ; and continued habits of vice will eradicate the very love of it out of the hearts of a people. A Marcus Brutus, in my time, could not have drawn to his standard a single legion of Romans. But further, it is certain, that the *spirit of liberty* is absolutely incompatible with the *spirit of conquest*. To keep *great conquered nations* in subjection and obedience, *great standing armies* are necessary. The generals of those armies will not long remain subjects ; and whoever acquires dominion by the sword must rule by the sword. If he do not destroy liberty, liberty will destroy him.

SERVIUS TULLIUS.

Do you then justify Augustus, for the change he made in the Roman government ?

MARCUS AURELIUS.

I do not—for Augustus had no lawful authority to make that change. His power was usurpation and breach of trust. But the government, which he seized with a violent hand, came to me by a *lawful* and *established* rule of succession.

SERVIUS TULLIUS.

Can any length of *establishment* make despotism *lawful* ? is not liberty an inherent, inalienable right of mankind ?

MARCUS

MARCUS AURELIUS.

They have an inherent right to be governed by laws, not by arbitrary will. But forms of government may, and must, be occasionally changed, with the consent of the people. When I reigned over them, the Romans were governed by laws.

SERVIUS TULLIUS.

Yes, because your moderation, and the precepts of that philosophy in which your youth had been tutored, inclined you to make the laws the rules of your government, and the bounds of your power. But, if you had desired to govern otherwise, had they power to restrain you?

MARCUS AURELIUS.

They had not.—The imperial authority, in my time, had no limitations.

SERVIUS TULLIUS.

Rome therefore was in reality as much enslaved under you as under your son; and you left him the power of tyrannizing over it by hereditary right.

MARCUS AURELIUS.

I did—And the conclusion of that tyranny was his murder.

## DIALOGUES OF THE DEAD.

SERVIUS TULLIUS.

Unhappy father! unhappy king! What a detestable thing is absolute monarchy, when even the virtues of Marcus Aurelius could not hinder it from being destructive to his family, and pernicious to his country, any longer than the period of his own life. But how happy is that kingdom, in which a *limited monarch* presides over a state *so justly poised*, that it guards itself from such evils, and has no need to take refuge in arbitrary power against the dangers of anarchy; which is almost as bad a resource as it would be for a ship to run itself on a rock, in order to escape from the agitation of a tempest!



END OF VOL. II.